

THEY THAT
TAKE THE SWORD

OTHER BOOKS BY
ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRATFORD

THE VICTORIAN TRAGEDY
THE HISTORY OF BRITISH CIVILIZATION

THEY THAT TAKE THE SWORD

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IN PROUD AND LOVING MEMORY OF
LIEUTENANT ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRATFORD, R.N.
KILLED AT SEA, MARCH 15, 1918

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I have to thank Captain B. H. Liddell Hart for his kindness in reading and criticising my manuscript.

PREFACE AND SUMMARY

IN this book I have tried to tell the truth about war. That truth may be comprehended in a sentence. War is a disease of civilization. It is a disease whose malignancy increases with every increase in Man's command over the blind forces of nature. We are approaching, if we have not already reached, the stage at which another attack will prove fatal, certainly to civilization, as we know it, and conceivably, in the long run, to human life on this planet.

The theme is of such vital urgency, that the temptation must needs be constantly present to forsake the service of truth for that of propaganda. How far I have succeeded in resisting it, it is not for me to judge; I can at least plead that to do so has been my constant endeavour. No special pleading is needed to demonstrate the hatefulness of war or any other disease. The facts speak, and should be allowed to speak, for themselves.

It may be helpful to preface the book by a very brief summary of its contents. I have first tried to put the subject into perspective by showing the relation between conflict, and its opposite, love, in the development of the universe. Progress in evolution is a progress in unity, in co-operation, in the membership of each in all, in the fulfillment of every lesser individuality in a greater, until God, the supreme and ultimate unity, shall be all in all. There is no basis in fact for the evil mysticism, so popular in Victorian times, that substituted for the love that moves the sun and the other stars, a cut-throat competition of all against all, out of which, in some inexplicable way, good was supposed to come.

I have next dealt with the kindred fallacy of the original, and therefore perpetual, warlike nature of Man. There was never, so far as our evidence goes, any person remotely resembling the cave man of popular fiction, a ruthless and club-wielding anarch. It is highly probable that, for the greater part of his existence on this planet, Man contrived to exist like his cousins the apes, in entire ignorance of war and innocence of any tooth and claw struggle for survival.

This brings us to the consideration of warfare between man and man, as distinct from that between communities. Here, indeed, we do find, among comparatively civilized peoples, the institution of the duel, with its appropriate code of honour. But instead of being a survival from primitive times, the duel turns out to be a diseased product of civilization itself, a nuisance that the most advanced nations have shown themselves fully capable of extirpating. Among primitive peoples it is the rare exception for individuals to settle their differences by mortal combat, and when they do, the duel is almost invariably the result, not of natural pugnacity, but of superstition. The fight turns out to be, in essence, a rite.

We pass from duelling between individuals to feud and vendetta between those symbolic personalities united generally—though by no means invariably—by the fiction of a common blood. This again is a nuisance that civilized peoples, in proportion to their civilization, have succeeded in extirpating, except in so far as the fiction of blood has been brought up to date in the form of national and racial egotism.

An examination into the causes of war reveals that it is by fictions, pious or otherwise, more than by any calculations of material advantage, that men, in the mass, are set at each other's throats.

The question next arises, how war came to infect civilization. The great, peaceful realm of ancient Egypt affords proof that there is no necessary connection between even the highest civilization and war. Civilized man, as under the later Pharaohs and in the Tigris-Euphrates Basin, has been dragged into war in spite of himself, until what started with being a necessity ended by becoming a habit—a soul-destroying habit—as it appears by the study of completely militarized communities like Assyria, Sparta and Prussia, in which war, and the preparation for war, have absorbed so much of human energy as to leave nothing over for anything worthy the name of culture or creative genius.

With the advance of civilization, war ceases to be a straightforward fight in which the best men, or at any rate the best fighters, win. It becomes a capitalized industry in which weapons and wealth count for more than manhood, and in which, finally, the soldier sinks to the service of the mechanical monsters that war

pits against one another, and against the non-combatant populations.

War, by diverting the energies of mankind to mutual destruction, has been the greatest of all obstacles in the path of progress. Civilizations have perished for no other reason than that they have had the life bludgeoned out of them. Most of this destruction has been perpetrated in ignorance of the first principles of social mechanics. Conquest and expansion, by increasing the strain on the social structure, are more often a source of weakness than of strength. It is by suicidal motives that men, in the mass, are most frequently impelled to homicide.

Like every other industry, war has its specialists. The service of organized violence naturally tends to engender a primitive type of mind, and a character in which the finer emotions developed by civilization are stunted. The soldier is a perpetual reactionary of force. His calling is the negation of justice, of freedom, of loving-kindness, and of reason. This last limitation results in the paradox that however obviously intelligence may be a factor of military success, the effect of a lifetime of soldiering is to retard the development of those very faculties most essential in the highest command. The record of even the greatest captains yields abundant evidence of primitive mentality.

What we may call the Darwinian necessity of a struggle *à outrance* for survival has by no means been accepted by the human race as a whole. Such great civilizations as those of India and China have shown that it is possible to maintain spiritual values intact, and to keep the soldier in his due, and subordinate, place. What shall it profit a people if it gain empire or security at the price of its own soul? This, above all, was the spirit of the Hebrew prophets, the spiritual ancestors of Christianity, with its attempt to found a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, a Kingdom whose throne is in the breast of every believer, whose law is not violence but love, and whose frontiers are those of civilization. That attempt broke down, in the Middle Ages, because Christianity was unable to rest true to itself or its Founder.

The result of that breakdown was to throw back the development of mankind in the most disastrous way. To the ideal of a united Christendom succeeded the reality of an anarchy of nations, a state of things that, if it could not be mended, must

end, sooner or later, in universal suicide. The attempts of eighteenth century rationalists and nineteenth century liberals to provide the basis of a wider unity never had a driving force behind them comparable to that of Christianity, and during the Armed Peace that followed the Franco-German War, national and racial egotism flourished unchecked, and were intensified by all the arts of machine-fed mass suggestion.

Meanwhile a new and ominous development was the application of machine power to the business of war. Owing to the merciful backwardness of the military mind this process was delayed until long after the transformation of peaceful industry. But the soldiers, if incapable of achieving progress, were unable, in the long run, to avoid having progress thrust upon them. Gradually and tardily, the machine asserted its dominance over the man as an agent of destruction.

The anarchy of nations made it inevitable that whatever energies Man might command should, at irregular intervals, be devoted not to the enrichment but to the destruction of his civilization. The Military Revolution was continually increasing and multiplying these potentially destructive powers, while the fabric of world-wide co-operation and credit, on which civilization depended, was growing ever more liable to mortal injury. Sooner or later the time must come after which the combined effect of these tendencies would be to make the outbreak of war, on the grand scale, inevitably fatal to civilization.

The events and sequel of the recent Great War showed that this point had been very nearly reached in 1914. Indeed, this may conceivably be an under-statement, for who will be bold enough to say, for certain, that mankind is even now destined to recover from its effects? That prolonged act of criminal lunacy, in which the military mind was revealed as more stupid and unteachable than at any time in the past, not only stripped the last rags of romance and decency from the business of international butchery, but made it as clear as day that civilized Man had received his last warning. Either he must put his new house in order and adapt himself to the environment of a machine age, or perish soon and miserably.

Even the horrors of those four years are as nothing in comparison with those that must inevitably be let loose at the next

breaking of the peace. In 1914, three-dimensional warfare was in its infancy. Fleets and armies, so long as they remained in being, were still a protection from violence, except that of fitful raids, to the civilians behind their shield. The last phase was yet to come, in which the armies would stalemate each other in their trenches while the air-fleets would proceed to their task of annihilating the helpless peoples.

The collapse of civilization under circumstances of unimaginable horror is the doom that awaits each and all of us, unless we can use this last chance afforded to us of purging the disease of war from our social system. It is not enough to frame laws and treaties, leagues and covenants, indispensable though these things may be. War is a spirit, and it is only by a change of spirit that we can hope to master it. Every revolution of environment demands a corresponding revolution of the inner man—the choice is always between adaptation and death. The Kingdom of God is within us.

Such, in brief outline, is the argument of this book. I am well aware that the space at my disposal has compelled me to concentrate on the one, brutal fact of war, without devoting as much attention as I could have wished to the spirit of which war is an expression, and of the countervailing spirit by which peace on earth comes to men of good-will, the spirit of co-operation and love. If our immediate and urgent task is to demolish the temple of the war god, our next will be to build up on its ruins that of Eros and Psyche, Love and the Spirit.

That task I must leave to the future. For the present it will suffice if I can make it clear that the nature of war is such that we must either contrive to prevent it from ever breaking out again, or resign ourselves to perish. If the events that are filling the columns of our daily newspapers, and conjuring up before the most prosaic of us the spectre of imminent disaster, are not sufficient to drive home the lesson that we are members one of another, then indeed no facts or reasoning can be of the least avail, and national egotism is destined to go on to its end of universal suicide.

Can anyone, who has followed the development of the present world crisis, doubt that, under modern conditions, the wages of war is death? Civilization is even to-day in mortal peril from the

effects of the last war—how can it hope to survive another and deadlier? In 1914, those who broke the peace, those who allowed it to be broken, knew not what they did. To-day there is no such excuse. Everyone not blinded by passion and mass suggestion will know, in his inmost being, that the firing of the first gun in a war between any of the great civilized powers will proclaim that the supreme catastrophe is no longer to be averted.

War is born of an anarchy of nations grotesquely unsuited to the conditions of modern life. A patriotism confined to frontiers and expressing itself in armaments and tariff walls, is not only the evidence of a stunted mentality, but it is not even sane selfishness. Any competent financier or business man knows that civilization is international, that the peoples stand or fall together. He who loves his country and hates her neighbours is his country's, no less than mankind's, worst enemy. If it is impossible to include and transcend patriotism in a wider love embracing the whole human race, then indeed

"Our hap is loss, our hope but sad despair,
Our ranks are broke, and ruin follows us."

But there are some who think more nobly of human nature and its possibilities. Their faith has not been without its support. The great and generous gesture of President Hoover in consenting—if only for one year—to a suspension of the war debts that threaten to bring the whole economic structure of civilized society crashing in ruins, is an augury of hope for the future. The anxiety of those very nations, who recently desired nothing better than the ruin and plunder of Germany, to preserve that country from a collapse in which they themselves would be involved, is evidence of a new sanity. Is it too much to hope that a like spirit will be displayed in that all-important Disarmament Conference from whose success or failure such momentous consequences are bound to follow? It may be only by faint and uncertain gleams that the darkness of the prospect is relieved. But let us take heart of courage! It is such gleams that hint of the coming dawn.

CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|---|------|
| I. WAR AND CIVILIZATION | 1 |
| II. CONFLICT AND LOVE | 17 |
| III. THE CAVE MAN FALLACY | 31 |
| IV. THE DUEL | 39 |
| V. THE BLOOD FEUD | 54 |
| VI. WHY FIGHT? | 72 |
| VII. HOW WAR INFECTED CIVILIZATION | 87 |
| VIII. THE QUINTESSENCE OF MILITARISM | 108 |
| IX. SINEWS OF WAR | 126 |
| X. STRAINS AND STRESSES | 141 |
| XI. THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF WAR | 160 |
| XII. THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL | 174 |
| XIII. THE SOUL OF THE SOLDIER | 194 |
| XIV. THE MIND OF THE SOLDIER | 209 |
| XV. CONQUERING HEROES | 218 |
| XVI. THE ESCAPE FROM WAR | 235 |
| XVII. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN | 253 |
| XVIII. INTERNATIONAL ANARCHY AND THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT | 271 |
| XIX. THE NINETEENTH CENTURY | 282 |
| XX. THE MILITARY REVOLUTION | 300 |
| XXI. THE TRAGEDY OF ERRORS | 317 |
| XXII. ORDEAL BY EXHAUSTION | 331 |
| XXIII. POST-WAR | 355 |
| XXIV. THE SUICIDE OF CIVILIZATION | 373 |
| XXV. THE HOPE FOR CIVILIZATION | 395 |
| INDEX | 413 |

CHAPTER I

WAR AND CIVILIZATION

THOSE of us whose memories run back to the nineteenth century, must feel as if not only their world, but their very universe, had been turned upside down in the twentieth. The ordinary plain man, of the *fin de siècle*, felt particularly sure of the universe his scientists had discovered for him, and found it as solid and substantial as the domestic furniture that even then was getting a trifle old-fashioned. Late in the preceding century a clergyman had found his symbol of that universe in a watch ticking on a heath, and, with the prosaic commonsense of his time, had deduced a watchmaker. The rationalists of the eighteen-nineties surveyed a machine with far more complicated works but cut out the need for a maker by substituting the magic word "Evolution," whereby was implied an unbeginning and probably unending process of self-construction, self-acting, and self-sufficiency.

Complicated as it was, this machine had constructed itself on principles simple enough for a child to understand. You had been given—though by nobody in particular—two eternally fixed quantities of two eternally indestructible things called matter and energy. You put these to work—or rather they put themselves to work—in a space that went on for ever and ever in every direction, and in a time that always had eternity behind as well as in front of it. The energy had an annoying quality of dissipating itself, so that the machine always had been, presumably from the unbeginning of time, like a battery running down without being recharged. But no doubt it would find ways of recharging itself—for Evolution, being a gospel, demanded a faith. As for matter, that was made up of some ninety-two kinds of minute, pill-like units, perfectly solid, indivisible, and impenetrable. And finally, in order that Evolution might be a going concern, Nothing-in-particular had to make a definite and rather

startling concession, namely, that every minute bit of matter in the universe should exercise a minute pull on every other bit, in accordance with laws ascertained by Sir Isaac Newton. After which simple and trifling preliminaries, the whole sacred though by no means divine process could go merrily and eternally on, albeit with one or two nasty jumps, like that from non-life to life, that the good steed Faith was capable of negotiating. Not to believe in this was to be certified of that insane and damnable heresy christened Obscurantism.

Having swallowed this cosmic camel, it was hardly to be expected that any one should strain at such a mundane gnat as his own, *fin-de-siècle* civilization. Nor, in fact, did any one dream of doing so. Anticipating the precept of M. Coué, people were all engaged, more or less, in composing their own different variations on the theme: "Every day and in every way we are getting better and better." That blessed word Evolution gave a fine, scientific *cachet* to optimism, but what was even more popular with the plain man was its human equivalent, Progress. Faith in Progress amounted to an unquestioning conviction that in spite of anything that anybody could, or would, do to the contrary, human civilization was, for a period perhaps fixed by the dissipation of solar energy, but certainly quite incalculably long, bound to go on getting better and better, with an acceleration like that of a falling body. Only this particular fall was taken for granted to be not down but up.

To the children of those hustling and hectic nineties it was evident that civilization was progressing faster and faster. The speeding up had first begun to be manifest a century and a half before, when science, as applied to the making of machinery, had begun to revolutionize the conditions of human life. Nobody—and that was where faith came in—dreamed of suspecting that any revolution conducted under scientific auspices and recorded in mounting statistics of quantity, could lead otherwise than in a heavenward or Utopian direction. Even if skyscrapers had been in vogue, there would have been no particular significance attached to the parable of a man who, in process of a fall from a fiftieth story window, remarked, *en passant*, to a friend on the third, "All right so far."

We harbour no such cheerful assurance to-day. Our safe

pessimist is old optimist writ upside down. Of all the insults ever offered to poor struggling humanity, surely the most intolerable was that of Herr Spengler, who, having cut up humanity, on certain principles satisfactory to himself, into a number of extinct or doomed civilizations, places himself and us somewhere near the end of the latest. There is no sort of escape. Even our scientific discoveries are merely symptoms of the now rapidly subsiding form of mental kink that a doctor might have christened Faust's disease—though this is rather hard on poor Faust, who at least exercised a free choice between Heaven and Hell. If Einstein or Ptolemy or St. Thomas Aquinas had gone to a psycho-analyst of Spenglerian leanings, he would probably not only have been cross-questioned about the Rabelaisian things he thought in his infancy, but also about the kind of universe he chose to inhabit in his manhood. We are asked to imagine ourselves, collectively, like the villain in the puppet show, brought on to the stage in the last act to be killed at the proper moment, while only one man in all the human race sits free and serene behind the scenes to tell the puppets what is going to become of them:

“He knows about it all! He knows! He knows!”

We recognise in Herr Spengler's pessimism the last dregs of the old nineteenth century optimism. It is one thing to say that we live in a threatened civilization, it is an entirely different thing to be doomed to say that we live in a doomed one. No doctor would want to waste his time prescribing for what Lord Braxfield would have described as a “gude hangin’,” timed to take place on the following morning.

The old determinism, or up-to-date version of Calvinist predestination, which, unless a man believed whole and undefiled, he could not be scientific, is wearing a little thin in a gossamer universe made up not of specks but of symbols. We now have a scientist, of the standing of Professor Eddington, unblushingly proclaiming that even in the material world strict causality is abandoned, and that consequently we are no longer under our former necessity of supposing the mind to be subject to deterministic law. It is indeed doubtful whether any one has ever been quite mad enough to accept a thoroughgoing predestination as his working faith. Calvin himself was hard put to it to meet the

objection that a man whose lot is predestined from and to all eternity, has no incentive whatever for avoiding sin, and he met it less by argument than full-lunged theological Billingsgate. The nineteenth century rationalist seldom numbered humour among his many good qualities, or even he might have seen something a little undignified in the spectacle of a dogmatic automaton, automatically commanding other automata, in the name of reason, to have faith in the Unknowable whose service is perfectly automatic. It is something to be said for the nineteen-thirties that we have at last learnt to laugh at that kind of sophistry.

If, therefore, we find ourselves called upon to face an unprecedented crisis in the history of mankind, let it be in the faith and consciousness that our destiny is in the power of our own free will. There is no law of progress or decline that we have not made or that we cannot revoke. To the determinist indicative we can oppose the imperative of sanity. However dire the peril, civilization must and shall be saved.

If such a spirit be ours, we need not shrink from acknowledging that the labour of salvation may prove likewise heroic. For a total breakdown of civilization, which had seemed, in the early years of the century, as remote as the end of the world, did suddenly, between the breaking of the peace in 1914 and the armistice of 1918, become an imminent possibility. Even as it was, human progress received a terrible set-back. And it became obvious, to any one not wilfully blind, that the science and machinery with which Man had armed himself for the conquest of nature, were able to destroy far more quickly and efficiently than they had ever been able to construct. It takes a great deal of time and labour to build the house that one well-directed projectile is able to smash like an eggshell. If the house, like Rheims Cathedral, happens to be God's, a few artillerymen may be able to rob the world of that which all its artists and craftsmen can never dream of restoring. Or let that house be what St. Paul described as the temple of the Holy Spirit; on this any dull-witted conscript can in a moment inflict injuries that the whole resources of medical science are powerless to cure. A few ships, useless for any purpose except that of destruction, can, by stopping other ships from bringing food to human mouths, afflict a whole generation of children with rickets.

Nor is this all, for, as civilization progresses, the invisible machinery by which it is held together becomes continually more intricate and vulnerable. We men are more and more dependent upon one another's good offices. And the more complicated a machine is, the more easily it is put out of order by rough or malicious usage. We live, move, and have our being, by an organisation of mutual trust. The more this organisation is perfected, the more irretrievable becomes the catastrophe of its ceasing to function. Our swelling and increasingly urban populations, after all, are made up of animals, every one of whom carries about with him a belly that demands to be filled at least twice a day. Once let the machinery of credit become strained beyond a certain point, and to millions, perhaps the majority, of these bellies, food will cease to come. And this is a catastrophe that, in time of war, the whole resources of science and civilization are deliberately employed to compass. The attempt came within measurable distance of success toward the close of the World War.

The destructive powers of mankind are, in fact, being increased at a far greater rate than its powers of construction. Every year of progress renders the disproportion more overwhelming, and makes it more certain that the destructive powers, if once again unloosed, will bury civilization beneath its own ruins.

So far as our knowledge goes, there are no limits set to the betterment of human life, except those which we set ourselves. We retain our heritage of the future on one sole condition, that the powers with which civilized man has armed himself be not devoted to his own destruction. The terrible destructive forces latent in civilization, forces that grow every year more capable of shattering that civilization to pieces, can remain for all time as harmless as high explosives stored underground, unless we deliberately unchain them. The good ship on which we are embarked is capable of weathering every gale, and bearing us to undreamed-of El Doradoes, provided that no pistol is discharged into the powder magazine.

The vital issue before mankind is thus of a nature wholly spiritual. The complacent materialism of the nineteenth century applied its own standards to its estimate of human prospects. For a century and a half we had gone on getting bigger and bet-

ter machines; it was therefore natural to assume that each successive generation of our posterity would provide itself with machines bigger and better still. Machines had produced all sorts of desirable things in ever-increasing numbers, and it might therefore be deduced that with each addition of "great," our grandchildren would revel in greater luxury, get about at a faster pace, and break all parental records. "Put your trust in your machinery"—ran the new gospel—"for that will surely provide."

Unfortunately the machines were exactly what the more influential of their worshippers imagined themselves to be, perfectly incapable of making a free choice between good and evil. And they had this further quality, that their latent potentiality for evil was out of all proportion greater than their active power for good. It lay entirely within the free choice of their creator, Man, whether they should speed him up the long ascent of life, or provide him with a short cut to suicide. Even Science was neutral in this regard. She had the secret of power, but cared not to what ends that power might be applied. Torture could be as scientific as medicine; life could be destroyed as scientifically as it could be saved.

We are now in a position to understand what is meant by describing modern civilization as the greatest of all gambles. The word is used in no disparaging sense. Upon that venture to which mankind committed itself blindly, it might well have embarked with its eyes open. It is not unworthy of the lords of life to play for high stakes. But it is as well to realise exactly in what the gamble consists. Man, by his conquest of nature, has put himself, like every other species whose environment has been suddenly transformed, in mortal peril, a peril that must inevitably increase as the transformation becomes more complete. But that peril can never materialize so long as the spirit that impels mankind to suicide is not unchained. War on earth can only come to men of ill will.

God, if there be a God, is a spirit—Man is no less. And it is just in its failure to apply spiritual standards to the main problems of human development that the pre-war generation failed to understand the real trend of that evolution to which it paid such fervent lip homage. Matter is at the mercy of environment; life

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replies, and the higher it rises in the scale, the more decisively does it assert its independence of environment and crown independence with mastery. More important than statistics of things produced and things transformed is that which no statistics can measure, the developing spirit of man, and the degree to which that spirit is capable of commanding its fate, instead of sinking crushed beneath it. *Decrevi*—I have decreed—is the motto of an English family. It might serve for that larger family that used to trace its descent from Adam. It is the spirit of life.

The greatest of all modern revolutions has been in the realm of things, a mechanization of environment. But such a revolution demands, as its accompaniment, one even greater, a spiritualization of Man. In proportion as the world without is transformed, so must the man within evolve, not as being acted upon, but as reacting, perfecting himself along his own lines, until by taking thought, Man has added so many cubits to his spiritual stature that he can dominate the blind giants of his own creation. If we could conceive of the gods on Olympus as spectators of the human drama below, we might imagine them saying to each other, between the scenes:

“So far, we have been listening to the challenge of Things. But what is going to be the answer of Man?”

If we can think of no better answer than that of 1914, then indeed is the Tragedy Man likely to end—and at no distant date—as it does in Edgar Allan Poe's verse:

“Out, out, are the lights, out all!
And o'er each quivering form
The curtain, a funeral pall,
Comes down with the rush of a storm.”

Let us state the problem before civilized man in the simplest terms. He commands, at the present time, an unprecedented and ever-increasing amount of energy. Energy is in continual process of being radiated and dissipated all over the universe, and it has been the special task of life, since its first beginnings, to seize on as much of it as possible, and store it and use it. During the last two centuries, Man has been discovering how to do this with bewildering rapidity. Until well on in the eighteenth century, he had been content to supplement his own muscles with wind,

water, and various kinds of fuel. He had also made trial of the possibilities of chemical combination in the invention of gunpowder—a mild explosive, judged by subsequent standards. The amount of energy at the disposal of mankind in 1750 was certainly not such that its mis-directed employment, in any conceivable circumstances, was fraught with mortal peril to the species.

To-day that peril exists, and is continually increasing. Not only are the forces at the disposal of mankind incalculably greater, but civilization itself, in proportion as it is more highly organized, becomes more liable to mortal injury. It is not easy to put an end to primitive organisms. You cannot assassinate a jelly fish by running it through the body. A beetle will carry on cheerfully after receiving half a dozen wounds of a kind that would kill a man. Some lizards—the Nile Monitor, for example—are tenacious of life to an extraordinary degree. It is the same with social organisms—and it was just his inability to grasp this truth that brought Napoleon to his ruin. Judging by his own France and the states of central Europe, he thought that by defeating the enemy's army and taking his capital he would crush all resistance. When he tried this on such comparatively low organisms as Spain and Russia, he found that the mere occupation of a capital did not cause much inconvenience to anybody, except the citizens on the spot. On the other hand, in the last great war, it was not even necessary for the Allies to occupy a single German town or win a single decisive victory, in the old sense, in order to shatter the hostile will to resistance.

We have, then, energy of an enormously enhanced destructive potency, capable of being unloosed upon a social organism of continually increasing vulnerability. It may not be easy to determine the exact point of time at which this energy and this vulnerability, between them, will have increased enough to make not only the crippling but the collapse of civilization the result of the potential destructiveness becoming active. The experience of the World War gives very good reason for believing that this point has either actually been passed—at least in so far as another world-wide conflict is concerned—or that, if not passed, it lies in the very near future.

Energy, of itself, is neither friendly nor hostile to life. It is, at best, an infinitesimally small part of a fund that, so far as we

can see, is being continually and gradually dissipated throughout the void of space. It maintains its eternal attitude of blind neutrality. And those mobilizers of energy, the machines, are similarly neutral. In tables of ordnance, we can set down exactly the muzzle velocity appertaining to every gun, its range, and the explosive force of its charge. We can determine, within a reasonable degree of accuracy, the precise amount of damage—say to a cathedral—that would be secured by a direct hit. It is all a matter of forces and tensions, of velocities and resistances, one of exact and quite inhuman calculation. But we are in a different region when we want to know whether the gun is going to be fired at the cathedral. Here, unless we are to go the whole way with those who call themselves Behaviourists, and reduce men themselves to machines, no calculation will avail us. We are in the realm of spirit. It is the spirit that gives life even to the blind forces stored in a gun. It was once said, "The guns will go off by themselves," which is just the very thing that—save in such exceptional circumstances as their being struck by lightning—guns will never do.

It is a common delusion that, with the increase of man's command over matter, the importance of the spirit becomes continually less—there is even a vague sort of idea that when the world becomes well and truly mechanised, the machines will run Man. But the rôle of the spirit becomes more decisive, and its responsibility more vital, with every fresh increase of power at Man's disposal. The wrong spirit—if we may take wrong in the sense of destructive and suicidal—has been capable of harm enough, in all conscience, during previous ages, but never before has it had human civilization so completely at its mercy.

The modern mind is chary of talk about right and wrong. But if we are to think in terms of spiritual values, this cannot be avoided. It is only life that possesses an imperative. Matter—in so far as we can interpret its language—has nothing beyond the conditional. We can imagine the gun as saying: "If you do such and such things to me, such and such results will follow." But we cannot imagine it going on to say, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O Man my lord!"

We know that in the early months of 1914, machines were at work all over the world diverting the raw energy of nature into

courses that—judged by ordinary standards—tended towards the good of mankind. Whether much greater benefits could not have been realized, or whether those that were realized were fairly distributed, are points that need not concern us for the moment. It is enough to say that by far the greater number of industrial products were turned out in the hope of pleasing somebody enough to induce him to pay for them. There were, it is true, other products of a more sinister import—bayonets, for instance, and battleships. But as long as these were not put into active use, as engines of destruction, the energy put into their construction merely required to be written off the books of human progress as a dead loss. If not in every way or to the greatest possible extent, mankind in those pre-war days, might not unplausibly have claimed to be getting better and better.

Then, one morning in June, there had been the pressure of a forefinger on the trigger of an automatic pistol, and as the sound of the report died away, life—for all except one man and one woman—had appeared to go on in its normal course. And yet the effect of that trifling pressure had been to divert the energies that had been mobilized all over the world for the service of Man, to the end of Man's destruction. For this genial purpose, energy was squandered in unprecedented quantity and employed with unprecedented skill, since it proved to be the literal truth that human enthusiasm and ingenuity could be more generously evoked for suicide than they ever had been for service. All the destructive machines began to function at high pressure, and they could not be multiplied or fed fast enough. That fairy godmother, science, began to make discoveries about the effect of chlorine and other poison gases upon the human system, about the possibilities of constraining the females and young of a creature unprovided with gills to fill their lungs with salt water, to mention only two of many ingenious and agonizing devices for the mass extinction of *Homo Sapiens*.

What had happened? What had caused all these serviceable energies to function in a manner so violently and yet so cunningly anti-human? The simplest way of putting it would seem to be that a certain spirit had been unchained, and for the space of four years had obtained sway over the world-widening circle of combatant nations. This spirit, or something very like it, was

no new phenomenon, and in fact has manifested itself so often that it has been mistaken for an ineradicable part of human nature. Times without number nation has warred on nation, city on city, group on group. Time and again it has been the supreme and holiest object of Man, in the mass, to devote all the energies at his command to inflicting the utmost possible harm upon other men outside the pale of his sympathies. But always, hitherto, however much Man may have suffered from his wars, they have constituted no mortal threat to the species, and seldom to its highest civilization. It has been argued—with what validity we shall see—that they have been on the whole a blessing in disguise. It has only been in modern times that the forces at the disposal of mankind have become so tremendous, and civilization itself so vulnerable, as to make the breaking of the peace assume the proportions of a supreme, if not a mortal disaster.

No other task is of such urgent importance, in our time, as that of getting a clear understanding of this spirit whose continuance is fraught with the menace of universal ruin. In spite of the war, and in spite of the immense flood of war and peace literature, this is a subject on which clear thinking, backed by adequate knowledge, is fatally lacking. The platitudes and catch phrases that did duty before the War are flourishing as strongly as ever. Many of these are variations upon the theme of unchanging human nature—as preposterous a denial of the evolutionary principle as was ever put forward by the most bigoted fundamentalist. Then there is the assertion—by no means borne out by facts—that where Man has been, there also has war been, and this is made the basis of the wildly illogical deduction that what has always been in the past must always be in the future.

A rather more subtle, and therefore more dangerous, fallacy is based upon the old-fashioned rendering of evolution. It is impossible, it is argued, to expect anything so revolutionary as the stoppage of war within our own lifetimes or those of our children. Messrs. Sumner and Keller, for instance, in their monumental treatise on sociology,* while quite ready to grant that war is not incapable of eventual elimination, go on complacently to add that war will doubtless be with us still for a long

* *The Science of Society.*

time. What they omit to add is that if war is with us even for a short time, there is likely to be no future for civilized man in which to eliminate it. Like the plague bacillus and its victim, both will perish together.

The doctrine—more usually implied than stated—that catastrophes do not happen, is a heritage of Victorian thought. The modern mind, with its recognition of Mendelism and its discovery of the Quantum, is less biased in favour of gradualness. There is no reason for making our own habits of mind the measure of the Universe.

Of a cruder nature are the various fallacies connected with patriotism. Those who deny the immortality of war are thrust aside as cranks, if not denounced as traitors. It is supposed that there can be no higher and no wider love than that of our country, and that such a love must needs go along with a proportionate antagonism to other countries. There is, in fact, something traditionally military about patriotism, an association with uniforms and brass bands and military parades. This is the result of a low and inadequate idea of love. The true patriot will love his country for no other reason than because she is loveable, and he, more than anybody else, will be repelled by such blasphemous vulgarity as that of A. C. Benson's lyric prayer for England:

"God who made thee mighty
Make thee mightier yet."

The wider love does not contradict the narrower. Patriotism can only attain its full stature in sympathy with other patriotisms, and united with them in the patriotism of mankind.

At the same time, we must be on our guard against letting-propagandist enthusiasm for any cause, however vital to the future of our race, colour our historical judgment. Even if the result of our investigations should lead us to agree with the Fathers of the Church in putting Mars among the devils, that is no reason for denying him his due. Some devils are said to be fallen angels. To what extent the spirit of conflict has helped or hindered human development in the past is a matter that can only be decided by the nicest discrimination, and a faith in the truth, that fears not to follow wherever she leads.

The task before us is to see and—as far as may be—understand the spirit* that impels men to devote their energies to one another's destruction. We would fain comprehend this spirit as a whole, in all its aspects and all its inwardness, comprehend it in the dimension Time, as it was, and as it is, and as it tends to become. Then having exhibited Mars as he really is, and invited any one who wills to look upon him unmasked and undisguised, we can leave each individual beholder to frame his own answer to the god's appeal:

"Let those who love me follow me."

* Those who object to the word "spirit" are welcome to substitute the less convenient but up-to-date circumlocution—"mode of behaviour."

CHAPTER II

CONFLICT AND LOVE

WE cannot hope to understand the spirit that impels men to destroy one another without a corresponding knowledge of that other spirit that binds them together and makes them seek one another's good. We might as well try to specialise in the study of negative without any regard to positive electricity. Conflict and love—to give these spirits their most obvious names—are so cunningly intertwined that, though they are the direct opposites one of another, it is often hard to say where the one begins and the other ends.

In such a body of fighting men as, for instance, the Sacred Band of the Thebans, the binding force was that of the most tender and passionate love, and it was thought no paradox in the days of chivalry that "the sternest knight to his mortal foe that ever put spear in rest" should also have been described as "the truest lover of sinful man that ever loved woman." In the lower forms of life the distinction is even harder to draw, as in the queen bee's nuptials that culminate in the death of the bridegroom.

There would appear to be a certain relativity even in the determination of spiritual values. What appears to us as love, if viewed in one perspective, may in a wider or narrower field of vision assume all the lineaments of hatred, and *vice versa*. If we are to attain anything like an absolute standard of values, we must try to come to seeing things as we may imagine that God sees them, with a vision ample enough to comprehend space and time in one all-embracing unity, and yet to lose nothing of the infinite diversity of that which they contain.

Such an ideal is no doubt as far above human capacities to realize completely, as a divine would be above a human intelligence. But it may not be wholly futile to make the nearest approach that our limitations allow us to imagining something of

the prospect that would unroll itself to a gaze so all-embracing and of such infinite penetration. In the enormous temporal-spatial globe of the universe, there have come into being a number so vast that no figures could express it, of infinitesimally small universes, each consisting of certain minute specks of electrical energy, systems of tiny planets whirling round their miniature suns in what, for them, is a vast emptiness. To a human intelligence, there would seem no particular reason why having once come into being, these systems, or atoms, should ever have done anything else than been scattered idly abroad on the vast ocean of space, like so many grains of sawdust emptied into the mid-Atlantic.

But that, to our watching intelligence, is not the way our universe happens. We have been taught to believe not only that space itself is finite, but that the space-time, which is the true setting in which we perform our parts, is curved. To impart any adequate sense of what space-time curvature means, is beyond the power of the most lucid expositor, but perhaps the nearest we can get to it is to say that we live in a biased universe, biased very faintly, yet measurably in every particle of its substance, towards unity. That vast, primeval parent, the Ouranos or Brahma that we call space, lies eternally inert, as if in dreamless sleep, but its children, the little universes called atoms, are such that they are eternally attracted one towards another. Not the least among them but is drawn, in however imperceptible a degree, towards every one of the others.

This curvature inwards—if we are not taking too bold a liberty with geometrical analogy—does not, as one might be tempted to imagine, result in a simple drawing together of all the particles into one, vast, central conglomeration of matter. In the cosmic drama there is no such inane conclusion as that of the happy union immediately on the rising of the curtain. Even the blind impulse to come together that we call gravitation fulfils itself by conflict as well as by unity. It is a conflict of attractions that has caused such planets as there are to go spinning round their suns, instead of remaining united with them in gaseous combustion. It is another conflict of forces that has caused the division of the waters from the land and thus made the adventure of life on *terra firma* possible. It is by virtue of this same

deep-rooted impulse to unity that we find streams fighting like living things to capture each other's head waters, and the ocean conducting, by sap and storm, its never-ending leaguer of the land.

If we pass from the domain of physics to that of chemistry, we shall find this same quality of mutual attractiveness between different kinds of matter. Goethe, whose poetic intuition, like that of Leonardo da Vinci, enabled him to attain a deeper insight into scientific truth than most professed scientists of his time, seized upon this analogy with human love, and made it the theme of his story *Selective Affinities*.

"You ought," says one of his characters, "yourself to see these creatures, which seem so dead, and which are yet so full of inward energy and force, at work before your eyes. . . . Now they seek each other out, attract each other, seize, crush, devour, destroy each other, and then suddenly reappear again out of their combinations, and come forward in fresh, renovated, unexpected form; thus you will comprehend how we attribute to them a sort of immortality—how we speak of them as having sense and understanding." *

Here, again, there is no simple urge towards unity. There are conflict and repulsion, as well as a tendency to combine, in the world of matter. But to a stronger and more intimate degree, chemical law speaks with the same voice as that of gravitation. The specks that make up the universe exist not for themselves alone. They are—so far as we may apply the word to non-living things—interested in one another; their destiny binds them together, even where they conflict. Our super-human intelligence sees before him in the void of time-space not a mere concourse of unrelated individuals—as if he were looking down from the top of Nelson's Column—but the majestic prologue to an unfolding, though as yet lifeless, drama.

The plot thickens, though the theme is the same, with the appearance of life upon the stage. It is the distinctive quality of life, even in its humblest forms, that it replies. Its motto might be that of Brian Boru: "It is not hereditary with us to submit." Environment acts, life reacts. And life itself may be taken as a reply to nature's supreme challenge of dissipating energy. Ac-

* Translation, Bohn's Libraries.

cording to our present knowledge, the universe is like a gigantic clock running down. Its energy, though indestructible, is gradually becoming inert and, for all practical purposes, dead. The sum of things is under a death sentence—on the last immensely distant but inevitable day,

“The clock will stop, the hand be broken,
And time be finished then. . . .”

But it is not hereditary with us to submit. Life steps forward out of the void, as inexplicably—according to our present knowledge—as Lohengrin from his swan-drawn boat, and challenges the sentence. Life begins to refashion the universe on its own lines, to take this wasting energy in hand and make the most of it. By what means it may assay, in future aeons, to conquer the apparently insuperable problem of that wastage, we cannot even conceive. The universe is very old, and life, as we know it, in its infancy. If it should not chance to die young, life has millions upon millions of years in which to develop, and the whole of time-space in which to expand. It may be destined to give birth to something as far above itself as life is above matter. It may become so purely spiritual as to be able to dispense with such props as matter and energy. But we are exercising ourselves in great matters that are too high for us. Let us hold fast to that which we know—it is not hereditary with us to submit.

With the coming of life, the inward curvature of space-time, the blind urge of every particle in the universe to enter into some sort of relationship with its fellows, becomes gradually conscious and finally self-conscious. Even in the most primitive forms of life, there is a tendency to come together. The naturalist may find it difficult to say precisely whether he has under the microscope a cluster of tiny animals, like a swarm of bees, or one animal made up of many, like Hobbes's Leviathan, or, for that matter, like Hobbes himself.

Still more emphatically do the units of life subscribe to that gospel of atoms: “We live not for ourselves alone.” Even from the first, the single-celled blobs of microscopic jelly, of which we can hardly say whether they are animal or vegetable, are not concerned solely with providing for their individual nutrition and needs. It seems in some way to have penetrated to those

blind and brainless intelligences that a gift has come into the world of inestimable value, of which they are the stewards and guardians. It is grossly to malign those who have set out before us upon the adventure of life, to talk of them as if they were engaged in a mere struggle for individual existence. The lowest and dimmest intelligence can put such theorists to shame. More important, even for the animalcule, than the struggle for bare life, is that for immortality. By the first the creature is preserved, by the second, ennobled.

It is not long, in that biological time to which a thousand years are as a day, before life has evolved for itself those twin means of compassing its ascending perpetuation that we call sex and death. If we see in sex the embryo of love, the saying will seem less hard, that it is by love that death came into the world. For death—whatever may prove to be its ultimate significance—is to the biologist a means of sacrificing your life or mine at the altar of life itself. Life must discard its individuals in order to rise:

"The one remains, the many change and pass."

Life is a torch to be passed on, and it is in the passing of it that this mortal touches immortality—that is the significance of Death. That of Sex is that the torch can no longer be passed on by one alone. It is only by two and two that we, the lords and ladies of creation no less than all but the lowest of creatures, can fulfil what appears to be our highest destiny and partake of the tree of life. This is not to prejudge the question of individual immortality. Life, of whose coming we know so little, may hold, no less than Death, secrets as yet unfathomed. That the apparently discarded individuals are all finally lost is more than we dare say—we are groping for evidence, and the evidence is conflicting. But, like the Greek astronomers with their sun-centred universe, we must frame our hypotheses in the light of the knowledge we have attained—not of that which we hope to attain.

One thing we can say, and that is that the higher we rise in the scale, the deeper the significance of the individual appears to become. But the fact remains that once having made its discovery of scrapping individuals, life began to exploit it with

magnificent profusion, and Tennyson was putting it very modestly when he said that

"of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear."

Of the seeds of human life, the fifty might be expanded to millions. To pass the torch of life, many are called, but few are chosen. Here our simile of the torch fails us, for we should have to conceive of a torch whose brightness or dimness varies with the individuals who pass it. The meaning of natural selection is that out of the numberless multitude who crowd to grasp it, only those couples will succeed who are on the whole fit to make it burn more brightly.

Into the controversial questions that arise in connection with this theme it is not our province to enter. But it does concern us to avoid the misunderstanding of those who rise and twit our Mother Nature with heartlessness and immorality, because the individual, who is temporal, has been nothing accounted of in comparison with life itself, which may be eternal. No man, however moral, has ever taken thought for every individual cell in the vast republic of his body. No couple, however religiously they may feel on the question of possible babies, can avoid a massacre of the innocents on a scale calculated to out-herod a thousand Herods. Who dies, if life lives?

As life develops and consciousness dawns, it becomes more and more apparent that individuality can only be fulfilled in unison with other lives:

"Each the whole its substance gives,
Each in the other works and lives,
Like heavenly forces, rising and descending,
Their golden urns reciprocally lending."

This verse of Goethe must be acknowledged to be more in accordance with the facts of evolution, as disclosed by modern research, than the prose of the Victorian Darwinians, that calls up the vision of an unmitigated cut-throat struggle of all against all. What will strike our superior intelligence, beholding the unfolding of the plot in space-time, is the increasing tendency of life, as it rises in the scale, to come together. That same

bias; or curvature inwards, which was the theme of the prologue, becomes more and more pronounced as we climb from a world of mathematical towards one of spiritual values. From the first, there had been a mutual bond of attraction between even the most distant of those microcosmi called atoms. Now that we are dealing with units of life, an even more subtle and less calculable bond has come into existence in the shape of mind, one destined to become infinitely more powerful than that of gravitation.

It is possible that, had a scientist existed at the beginning of the first millennium B.C., and been provided with instruments more delicate than any at our command, he might just have been able to measure the force of gravitation tending to draw together Naomi and Ruth, an attraction considerably less than that between either of them and the nearest big rock. But what instrument, even of experimental psychology, will measure the force of attraction recorded in the words, "The Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part me and thee"?

"Purpose" is a dangerous word to use in connection with evolution, but if we are to find any analogy to purpose at all, we must credit life with looking not backwards, into the slime out of which she arose, but forwards, to those novel and unique characteristics that differentiate her more and more from her parent Matter. The question we have to ask ourselves is not what life has grown, or is growing, out of, but whither, at any given moment of her development, she is tending.

As life arms itself with intelligence, so its individuals tend to draw together, not only for propagation, but for mutual aid and comfort, a theme lucidly expounded in the Anglican marriage service. Sometimes the attractive force is so strong, that something akin to telepathy seems needed to explain some of its manifestations, such as the way in which flights of birds are seen to manoeuvre literally as one. The most extraordinary instances of this solidarity occur in communities of bees and ants, and here it is attained by the virtual annihilation of individuality. The hive or ants' nest is what a body would be like if it were composed of detachable cells. Like the units that make up a body, the bees and ants are specialized for their various functions;

they are, in fact, animated tools. Except for such specialization, social unity in the insect world may be described as a unity without difference. And in this connection it is noticeable that the most advanced exponents of Bolshevism, and of what is known as rationalization, are busy with the propaganda of "Back to the insect!"

Quite different has been the trend of human civilization. Here an element is introduced into the problem that we find only in a rudimentary form in the animal world. The human brain has the power of storing its impressions and building them into images. This gives scope for the development of a conscious sympathy altogether different from the mere instinctive functioning in unison that we find in the hive. We hold the image of the beloved steady in our minds:

"Fools have no means to meet,
 But by their feet;
 Why should our clay
 Over our spirits so much sway
 To tie us in that way?"

No doubt there is something of this in a dog's love for his master, which is capable of surviving a long absence, but the dog lacks that means of mental fixation that is supplied by language. We shall be near enough to the truth for all practical purposes if we say that Man is, *par excellence*, the imagining animal.

With the dawning of imagination, life takes on a new aspect. Of the most intelligent animals, we can say that they live in a world of facts,

"Things that we can touch and see,"

not to speak of smell. But Man, even the most primitive, lives and acts in a world not only of what he sees, but also of what he conjures up. Dog will do battle over a question of food, or a love affair, or to assert his power, or simply for fun, but he does not visualize a Dog of all Dogs, beyond the clouds, who will arise on his behalf and let the cats be scattered. However much he may love the master he smells, he is totally incapable of feeling any affection for a Being beyond the reach of nose.

It is only by imagination that a rational and spiritualized love

comes into being, such a love as that by which the seeress Diotima led Socrates to the contemplation of supreme truth and beauty, that which Paul describes as "the love of Christ that passeth all knowledge," that which inspired Blake to sing:

"Everything that lives is holy,"

and again,

"The breath divine doth move,
And the breath divine is love."

But this is by no means the only effect of imagination. If it is capable of inspiring love of an altogether higher kind than that of a bee for its queen or even a dog for its master, it is also capable of arming Man for crimes that put all bestiality into the shade. Men's gods, if they are more, are also less than human. Head-hunting, cannibalism, torture, human-sacrifice, the extermination of whole peoples, have been inspired by motives of the devoutest piety. Christ Himself assured His disciples that the time was coming when whoever killed them would think that he was doing God service. The line between God-worship and devil-worship is not always an easy one to draw, even among civilized peoples. We must look upon imagination, as we look upon machinery, as a means of indifferently multiplying Man's power for the best, or most sinister purposes. It is the paper coinage of the mind. Most of us would prefer to be in the power of an enraged grizzly, rather than in that of a really imaginative torturer. And to those who hold to the old-fashioned idea of an eternal and omnipotent Torturer, it must be a question of some delicacy whether it is really better to fall into the hands of God than into those of Man.

Love being the fosterling of imagination, we must be prepared to give the widest application to the proverb that its course does not run smooth. It may be horribly perverted. Victor Hugo has given a dramatic picture of the Grand Inquisitor rising into an ecstasy of love for the victims whom he is saving by a fiery death from the pangs of Hell. It is love that has prompted many an Indian mother to yield up her daughter to a life of sanctified promiscuity. Perhaps the most frightful thing in all literature is the inscription Dante puts over the gate of Hell: "Divine power made me, highest wisdom and primal love." . . . Love!

26 THEY THAT TAKE THE SWORD

But love has been marred even less by perversion than limitation. In its most common form it has borne a Janus face, with a reverse side of hatred to those without the pale. It is the servants of God who hew Agag in pieces before Him, His crusaders who wade through the blood with which they have redened the streets of Jerusalem, in order to prostrate themselves in tears before the shrine of Christ crucified. The corollary to "love thy neighbour" was, with the men of old time, "hate thine enemy." It is a gospel not without its following among the men of to-day.

We have been taught, particularly by Haeckel, to see in the development of the human body, from the fertilized ovum, a rough synopsis of the course of evolution, from protoplasmic jelly to man. We can observe a similar progress in the development of mind. The tiny child is hardly an individual at all, and starts by speaking and thinking of himself in the third person, but once he becomes conscious of individuality, he is an out and out little individualist. The task of realising his own small personality and its wants is enough for the time being—he will pull the wings off a fly, or mutilate Nanny's best dress with the scissors, in the innocence of pure curiosity, and until the fly turns out to be a wasp, and Nanny a Tartar, there will not begin to dawn upon him that there are other individualities demanding as much respect as his own. His conscious love, as distinct from the mere liking that we can imagine him having felt for something that happened to be agreeable to him, like a toy or a kitten, begins to expand in ever widening circles, centring itself at first on a parent, presently on friends of his own age, seeking a more intense and passionate union with the development of sex-consciousness, embracing various groups of human beings, a school, a tribe, a city, a country, reaching outward towards the utmost bounds of the human race, linking the past and future together, spreading its wings to cover the very animals.

If this development were perfect and harmonious, we can imagine love becoming as wide as the world, perhaps as wide as the universe, and the greater loves not as destroying but as enriching and fulfilling the lesser:

"That man's the best cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best,"

or conversely:

"The firm patriot there,
Who made the welfare of mankind his care."

It is a narrow and stunted love that is incapable of expansion. It was one of the wisest as well as the most gallant of lovers who could write:

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more,"

and readers of *The Everlasting Mercy* will remember how the Russian, Saul Kane, in finding the love of God, found at the same time the beauty and love-worthiness of all His creatures.

But human love, unfortunately, has not yet learnt to expand with the harmonious smoothness of ripples made by the fall of a stone in a still pool. It is much more like the "push" of a modern army into an enemy's country; it bursts forward, at first, carrying all before it, but the push gradually loses its impetus, and finally comes to a standstill, and petrifies into trench lines. We should have to think of a ripple that may, at any stage of its outward expansion, be petrified as by the glance of some invisible Gorgon. The new art of psycho-analysis has showed how large a part in stunting mental development is played by repressions. Sometimes love sticks fast in the complete egotism of infancy, and we have what is known as the Narcissist temperament. Even more frequently it fastens itself upon a parent, and we have the all too common case of incurable bachelors and oldmaids, who could quite heartily subscribe to the sentiment voiced in a coon song of the "nineties":

"My sweetheart's my mammy,
The dearest, best sweetheart of all."

These repressions or fixations, as we have recently learned, are productive of the utmost harm and misery in individuals, but very little attention has so far been paid to the even more dangerous fixations of mass consciousness. In very primitive states of society, men are often unconscious of any sort of human bond with anybody outside their own small group. Even among peoples otherwise in the forefront of civilization, this stunted men-

tality that holds up love at the frontiers is only too widely prevalent. It was world-wide in the years preceding the Great War, in which it culminated. It is openly flaunted as the inspiration of Italian Fascism, and finds vent in such ravings as one to the effect that the meanest Italian is worth more than a thousand of the best foreigners. Another of these collective repressions takes the form of militant class exclusiveness, perhaps the most rapidly fatal of all forms of this malady.

Thus whether we limit our survey to the microcosmus of one individual or widen it to include the whole of human evolution, we see that every tragedy of civilization is one of arrested, or perverted, or insufficient love. For love gives us the norm by which we can estimate the success or failure of evolution, a compass by which, having taken conscious control of our human destinies, we can steer towards a goal. The further we travel along the road opened by Darwin, the more certainly we shall find that we are on the ancient quest pursued by the mystics of Christian Europe, and of the Near and Far East. We look, like them, for the coming of a kingdom, a kingdom within us, and binding us ultimately together in one all-embracing unity, the effect of which will be not to annihilate, but to fulfil and perfect every lesser love. We look for a freedom whose crown is perfect service, for a patriotism that prays, not that the motherland may be mightier, but lovelier and more loveable. We look for the human race becoming consciously alive and taking charge of its own destinies, until every particle of matter and every quantum of energy at its command is employed in wise and harmonious unison with all the rest, and all waste and conflict is eliminated, until, in Dante's culminative and magnificent words, desire and will are rolled, even as a wheel that moveth equally, by the love that moveth the sun and the other stars.

Thus there is a sense in which evolution itself, the more deeply we study it, does but lead us back to the golden and double rule of love for God and our neighbour, if we may see in God the one supreme Being that life is creating out of itself. But to believe that by merely adopting and repeating the golden rule, we have attained the sum of human wisdom, is mere sentimental laziness. More crimes have probably been committed in the name of love, than that of liberty.

That brings us to the last, and certainly the most neglected aspect of upward progress from the blind curvature of space-time, towards the as yet unrealized, and perhaps—since man is free—never-to-be-realized unification of life by love. Love is no simple emotion whose value is measured merely by its intensity. It is a less recent comer into the world than reason, and it is only by applying reason to love that love is prevented from being, like its parent, imagination, a merely neutral source of increased power, that may be applied for any purpose, creative or suicidal. Those who have watched the devastating effects of uncontrolled mother-love on the minds of children, or of an egoistic patriotism or class-selfish comradeship, or, worst of all, of a misdirected love of God, on the destinies of men in the mass, will know that it is one thing to love, and another to love wisely and well.

Love, in fact, is an art, the noblest and most difficult of all the arts. This was appreciated by no one more keenly than Plato, who, in what is perhaps the most inspired of all his dialogues, the *Symposium*, shows how very far short even the most beautiful speeches come from probing the innermost mystery of a spirit that has not only inspired every work of inventive genius, but is also capable of opening the door to the apprehension of supreme truth and beauty.

The gulf that is commonly supposed to be fixed between love and reason is, in fact, one that, at this stage of human progress, it is urgently necessary to bridge. A merely passionate mysticism is as lop-sided an anachronism as a merely arid rationalism. The suspicion with which the scientist has been apt to regard the initiate is by no means devoid of foundation. When Faust, in talking to Marguerite about God, declared,

"I have no name to give Him,
Feeling is all in all,"

he was more of a romantic sentimentalist than a philosopher. Feeling is not all in all, any more than reason is all in all. It is merely futile to react against modernity by raising the cry of "Back to Saint Francis," or seeking to be caught up in a "cloud of unknowing."

It is not only that love needs reason to direct and fructify it, but that, in the modern world, it represents the very principle of

reason against the opposite one of force: The ultimate argument to which nations have appealed in the past for the settlement of disputed questions, is really no argument at all:

"You shall give way, because if you do not I shall murder, rob, and starve you, until your will to resistance is broken, and your survivors have only their eyes left to weep with."

Dean Swift in his bitterest mood could hardly have penned a more grotesque *reductio ad absurdum* than was afforded by the clause in the treaty of Versailles, whereby Germany was forced to declare herself the aggressor in the War, not because even the victors imagined that any German believed it to be the truth, but because the alternative to her perjuring herself in public would have been armed invasion of a dis-armed Germany and the pitiless starvation of her women and children by the non-aggressive Allies, who were, in this very treaty, attempting to bleed her white for the next two or three generations.

It is the spirit of conflict that condescends to these depths of unreason, because force seeks her own and seeks it by any means. It is only love that is capable of detachment, because, being raised above egotism, she can see things as they are and judge of them without bias. Like Socrates, she can reason calmly and scientifically, even where death is the penalty of clear thinking. She does not argue for the sake of propaganda or victory, but to attain the truth in which she rejoices. It is love wedded to reason whose offspring is that sweet and serene wisdom that alone can save our civilization from collapse.

Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace,
She is a tree of life
To them that lay hold upon her.

CHAPTER III

THE CAVE MAN PALLACY

HERE flourished, during the mid years of the seventeenth century, a physically timid but intellectually combative old gentleman, called Thomas Hobbes, who propounded a theory of primitive human nature that even now is consecrated by popular slang. He was, in fact, a believer in the cave man as office boys believe in him to-day, a shaggy and aggressive egotist, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him. The philosopher of Malmesbury was, in fact, even less well informed about actual primitive men than the office boy, who at least knows about the cave, and does not credit his immoral anarch with the wildly inconsistent faculty of undertaking and forever abiding by a contract of submission to authority.

The cave man idea has, in fact, no more scientific validity than any other guess made in ignorance of the facts, but its importance as a social factor would be hard to overestimate. In every discussion about war, we are brought up against one form or another of the argument that war is so deeply rooted in human nature as to be ineradicable. Where man, there also war is, was, and shall be.

There is another version of the primitive man that was favoured, a century after Hobbes, by Jean Jacques Rousseau. This may best be described as that of the noble savage, a wise, peaceful and benevolent being, from whose high standards civilized man has fallen away to a lamentable degree. It is a more agreeable fiction than that of the disreputable cave man, but is just as much of a guess, or, more accurately, the product of its creator's temperament. Hobbes happened to want a world strongly and despotically governed; Rousseau was for freedom and classical simplicity; and each selected the kind of primitive best suited to his purpose. Since the War the "cave man" has been rather out of fashion, and there is a tendency for the pen-

dulum to swing in the direction of the noble savage. But the facts, when we come to examine them, turn out to be less simple than the supporters of either theory would have us believe.

Rousseau, no doubt, came nearer to the mark than Hobbes—in eighteenth century France there was access to information about primitive peoples, particularly Greenlanders, of gentle and inoffensive disposition, without the least trace of cave-manliness. A modern school of archaeologists has taken up the cudgels for primitive man, and has brought us back to the Biblical conception of the Fall, though in this latest version of the tragedy, the knowledge of good and evil comes more through the acquisition of metals than that of apples. And certainly these scholars have done great and abiding service in exposing the absurdity of the cave-man fiction, and the assumption that progress in civilization is also a progress in every virtue in all perfection. It has frequently been the reverse. Calculated cruelty, refinements of vice, deceit as a fine art, the intensive production of mass-hatred, all that goes so far beyond the limits of beastliness as to merit the term "devilish"—these are products of civilization.

There is certainly a wide-spread legend of a golden age, before men had discovered the arts of slaughtering and swindling and enslaving one another, and it is by no means improbable that it may have had a basis of fact. Children have an unsophisticated charm that wears off as they grow older, and some such agreeable simplicity may have marked the childhood of mankind. But Man, if he is to attain to his full stature, must put away childish things, and without the Fall there could have been no ascent.

Certainly no animal was ever less fitted by nature for a combative rôle than Man. His immediate relations, the apes—though he may have parted company with them anything up to a million years ago—are by no means pugnacious. It is true that in our boyhood many of us were thrilled by awful accounts of the ferocity and prowess of the gorilla—accounts largely founded on the yarns of that not unimaginative traveller, Du Chaillu. But the gorilla of real life appears to be of such a shy and evasive disposition that he is seldom, if ever, to be seen by a white man in his native forests. That other great ape, the orang-outan,

is so far from being an object of terror, that he is believed by the local natives to be a man like themselves, who lives wild and keeps his mouth shut for the excellent purpose of dodging the tax-collector. As for the chimpanzee, he is well known to be one of the most harmless and tractable of vegetarians.

A life such as we may suppose to have been led by man's immediate ancestor is one that offers few temptations to combat. "Red in tooth and claw" is a description that may apply to carnivora, but where the claws develop into hands it is for purposes of climbing and grasping rather than fighting. Man's arboreal ancestor may be presumed to have been a fairly harmless and probably sociable fellow.

What turned him from missing link into man was undoubtedly the greatest invention of any on record, not even excepting that of wings. This was the simple discovery that the business of locomotion, that had hitherto required the services of four limbs, could be equally well accomplished by two, leaving the front pair free to be specialized for any use to which the brain might elect to put them. Provided with hands, the brain gradually enlarged itself to cope with its new opportunities, and Man came down from his trees, armed himself with the sharpest stones that he could pick up, chipped them into tools and took to preying on his fellow animals. This represents a phase in human development that must have lasted for a period many times longer than the whole of recorded history.

Have we any warrant for believing that, during these many hundreds of generations, men devoted any considerable part of their activities to preying on one another, and that some primitive form of war was endemic even then? Our evidence warrants no more than a rough estimate of probabilities—but the probabilities are all against such an assumption.

What had men got to fight about? The world population of primitive hunters must have numbered fewer thousands than there are now millions. The scattered families, or groups, had certainly no land that they would have called their own or coveted from their neighbours. The soil provided neither tillage for corn nor pasturage for cattle. It must have been regarded partly in the light of a limitless hunting ground, partly in that of hostile territory belonging to Beast, against whose teeth and claws Man

was just beginning to match his stone weapons and budding wits. We cannot tell to what extent various packs of hunters anticipated the hunts of modern civilization in reserving to themselves their own country. But there must have been, in ordinary times, quarry enough and to spare for all—the difficulty being one not of finding, but of killing the Beast, without being killed oneself. Of other property besides land, there were only a few celts, scrapers and the like to tempt a raid.

When we try to deduce the conduct of Man in the Old Stone Age from that of the most primitive peoples we know to-day, we are treading on slippery ground. We have not the least reason for believing that those most ancient of all masters, who depicted the bison and wild boar on the cave walls of Altamira, had much in common with Cingalese Veddahs and Australian black fellows. But—for what it is worth—the argument from primitive peoples in historic times is certainly not in favour of a militaristic reconstruction of the past. Many of these folk, like the Veddahs and Esquimaux, are of the most harmless and peaceable disposition; the most primitive of all, the now extinct Tasmanian aborigines, only became harmful when goaded into futile retaliation by the whites, who eventually succeeded in exterminating them.

The fact that the most primitive peoples are not, normally, militaristic need not induce us to sentimentalize about them. Exactly the same causes that keep them from being greatly vicious keep them also from being greatly virtuous. They are incapable of the sustained concentration of feeling that crystallizes itself in reasoned loves or hatreds. Their fighting is like the squabbling of children—their combative passions are quickly aroused and as quickly appeased. If we are to regard evolution in the light of a continuous ascent of mankind above the animals, then the charm of immaturity is one of those childish things that the species is destined to put away.

But to come from analogy to such direct evidence as we have about the proceedings of our earliest human ancestors, it must be acknowledged that they have left us singularly few traces of warlike or combative instincts. Of the enormous number of implements that have been unearthed, up to the time of the Magdalenian, or golden age of cave art, there is none of which we

can say, for certain, that it was intended for the destruction not of Beast, but of Man. Even the wonderfully flaked flint tools, with their keen cutting edges, of those immigrants from the East whose chief gathering place was at Solutré, in the Macon district, may quite easily be accounted for as implements of the chase. True, we cannot say for certain that the weapons employed against Beast may not also have been used against Man, and indeed we may be fairly certain that those beautiful, leaf-shaped javelins would have afforded too great a temptation not to have been used as the ultimate argument in many a forgotten dispute. But that they were fashioned for such a purpose we have no reason whatever for asserting.

The earliest direct evidence that we have of the activities of Cain is furnished by the skull of a woman, of the famous Cro-magnon type, possessing a brain and physique fully equal to our own. This poor woman, who was expecting a baby, was mortally wounded by some sharp instrument, above the left eye, driven right through the skull. Whoever it was struck the blow did not finish his work, as there are signs of incipient healing. But here is no evidence of war—the fact of its being a woman and not a man points more to some domestic difference. What primitive Mr. Punch it was who thus proceeded from argument to blows, or what the poor man may have had to endure from the tongue of some forgotten Judy, we can only conjecture.

The Old Stone Age has bequeathed us nothing in writing—that art was still in the future—but it has left us a pictorial art from which we may reconstruct, to some extent, the life of these splendid pioneers of civilization. Though we have no key, and must proceed with great caution in the task of interpretation, we may gather that the cave man was enormously interested in hunting, and therefore in animals, that he loved to dance, that he was a lover of plump women—and the plumper the better—that he liked to be well turned out even if only in a handful of shells, and that he had begun to develop a religion and to take care of his dead, but that, if he had any interest whatever in war, it was not strong enough to seek for artistic expression.

There is, however, one question that it may be worth while asking, even though we are certain that it will never admit of anything but guesswork for an answer. By what precise process

did the yet earlier breed of men, represented by the owner of the Neanderthal skull, die out, after those giants of the Cromagnon breed had begun to encroach upon their hunting grounds? It is quite possible that the tall, deep-browed Nimrods anticipated the conclusions of modern science by regarding their squat, stooping, ape-like rivals as constituting a distinct species, one of the many varieties of Beast, against whom it was their mission in life to war. In such a contest, Providence would certainly have been on the side of the big brains and long limbs. But we have not the remotest evidence of any such conflict, except the fact that the inferior breed of men did cease to exist, and that in historic times, at least, men have needed the assistance of other men to accomplish the *hari-kari* of a race, let alone of a species. But perhaps, after all, it may have been a disease germ that did the mischief.

Of the passing of the Cromagnon type we may speak with a little more approach to certainty. Physically it was already on the decline when the Magdalenian culture, as it is called, succeeded—after the Solutrian interlude—to the Aurignacian. It was during this period that cave art attained its most astonishing development. But destruction was already coming from the South. In the North of Africa we have evidences of a culture in every way but one inferior to that of the Cromagnons. But this one point of superiority was decisive. The African hunters had discovered the use of the bow—with which there is no reason to believe the Northerners to have been acquainted—and what is more, discovered how to use it not only against Beast, but against Man. How else can we interpret the crude African sketch of one poor fellow sinking to the earth, pierced with darts?

The drift of peoples and cultures probably took place slowly, and we can follow the footsteps of the bowmen northwards, by the route taken by the Mohammedans of a later age, by way of Gibraltar, into Spain and Southern France. What is known as the Azilian culture is pretty certainly derived, in large part, from the earlier Capsian or Tunisian. These Azilians were men of the Iberian type, wiry, and swart, physically and intellectually not to be compared with the Nimrods of the North, upon whose hunting grounds they, as well as the forests of a warmer age, were now beginning to encroach. They were perfectly incapable

—though they tried—of emulating the art of the Magdalenian caves; they could only translate it into a language of crude and conventional signs.

They would have stood a poor chance in hand to hand combat. And yet—the Magdalenians disappeared. We cannot say for certain, but may we not conjecture that this was the first case of a superior weapon deciding the destinies of peoples? That the bow could be used for slaughter we know from the evidence of a stone arrow lodged in a human backbone. Perhaps the North-erners, naked and defenceless, found themselves shot down before they could close, as the naked Dervishes at Omdurman were mowed down by magazine rifles in the open desert.

If so, it was certainly one of the many cases on human record, that gives the lie to the dictum:

“ ‘Tis primal law
That first in beauty shall be first in might.”

Survival of the fittest merely means survival of the survivors. A brute with a bow or a revolver may, in a moment, snuff out the life of a genius whose striking radius is the length of his arm, one who has not chosen to specialize in manslaughter. Time and again in history we see beauty, intellect, nobility, yielding to the argument of superior force, and if this was not the burden of the tragedy that closed the Old Stone Age, it would be hard to find any other theory that fits the facts so well.

But even if we could feel certain about what is, after all, only a conjecture, we should have no warrant for talking of war, as waged by organized bodies of men. In none of the cave pictures, even those that fell within the sphere of the Azilian culture, is there the remotest suggestion of such a thing. We must picture any process of extermination as having taken place in innumerable petty conflicts and ambushes, spread out over we know not how many generations. And if we can detect here the seeds out of which war grew, we can say with confidence, of the rest of the Old Stone Age, that it was definitely pre-war. And whatever gaps in the record research may yet be able to fill, it is not conceivable that the remotest trace will be discovered of anything resembling Hobbes’s lawless egotists, or the cave men of popular imagination.

Organised war of man upon man is not the primal condition of the human species, and, in fact, for by far the greater part of its existence on earth, mankind succeeded in doing very well without it. But there is a primal state of war, one that has been always with us, and to which, when all swords are beaten to ploughshares and spears to pruning-hooks, we shall again be free to devote the whole of our energies. This is the great War of Man, not against, but for Man, recorded on the walls of his primeval cave dwellings, waged to-day by his scientists, his artists, his thinkers, the whole world over, to wrest from blind matter and energy the means of living, as Man should live, nobly.

CHAPTER IV

THE DUEL

ACCORDING to Aristotle, Man is a political animal. It would sort more with our present knowledge to say that Man is a herd animal. Even in the most barbarous communities, the individual is abnormal whose hand is against every man, and every man's hand against him. However brutal and malevolent he may be, he has surrounding him fellow beings with whom he feels himself at one. There is a circle of love, of which he is the centre, even if his reaction is one of hatred for everything beyond the pale.

It may seem strange to talk of love at all in connection with savages, the lowest of whom appear to be devoid of anything we should recognise as tenderness. But love is a word not only of human, but of universal application, if we are to recognise in it the power that moves the sun and the other stars. Tenderness is a product of its higher stages of development, but where men or animals habitually combine and hold together, there is love, in however rudimentary a form, in the midst of them. Even robbers and hooligans have need of it, to bind them together in their gangs. Even the devils in *Paradise Lost*, and the more degraded fiends in the *Inferno*, are not without a certain fellow feeling. There appear to be limits to the conceivable Hellishness even of Hell.

However far back we go in time, and however low we descend in the scale of civilization, we shall look in vain for the faintest evidence that a state of war is the normal relation between individual members of the human species. It is not only right but natural for Man to love his neighbour, if not as himself, at least more than he hates him. The question of course is bound to arise—"Who is my neighbour?" and on this subject the notions of Man are apt to be narrow in proportion to his primitiveness. But a hatred of the stranger, or foreign devil, is a sentiment of

the group, rather than of the individual. As that rousing appeal, the German Hymn of Hate, very lucidly puts it:

"We love as one, and we hate as one."

Even among animals, we find this rule holding, and the higher we rise in the scale, the more highly developed are the instincts of combination and self-help. Tooth and claw struggle for survival, between members of the same species, plays so relatively small a part in evolution as to be almost negligible. Starvation, bacilli, and the predatory activities of other species, are the great controlling agencies in natural selection. The struggle for survival is, for the most part, a direct struggle with nature.

No doubt a good deal of individual fighting does go on among animals, for passions are quickly aroused and not controlled by reason, but within the pack or the herd strife is the exception and co-operation the rule. It is the stranger against whom wrath is principally directed, as with the monkeys in the sacred city at Brindaban, who divide the town into four wards—and woe betide any monkey trespasser into another ward! But then, except among bees and ants, encounters between rival groups of animals of the same species are few and far between, though there is often co-operation against other species, as when we see an alliance of several different kinds of small birds against a hawk, or when, inspired by some dim, ancestral memory of battles of herd against pack, our farmyard cattle lower their heads and go through a ritual of half-hearted butting in the direction of any passing dog.

The most fruitful cause of strife between animals is the competition for mates. Of this we have the plainest evidence in the way in which males have often developed means of offence denied to females, such as the beautifully curved horns of certain antelopes, that do not look at first glance as if they could serve any other than an ornamental purpose, but which turn out in practice to be cunningly adapted for purposes of the duel. Here, in fact, the principle of Sir Lucius O'Trigger holds full sway, that when two gentlemen are in love with the same young lady the only thing to do is to fight it out. Those who believe in cave man stuff will expect to find the same thing happening in primitive human society, whence arises the fascination of the

"cave man" for civilized young women, who imagine that some raw and anarchic ravisher would prove an agreeable substitute for the mild and black-coated suitor of reality.

But it is just when we get to human society, that we find this most prolific source of individual combat cut off. Not even among the most primitive tribes do we find anything remotely approaching to sexual anarchy. "There is," says Mr. Robert Briffault, in his monumental treatise, *The Mothers*, "between the operation of sexual hunger in primitive human social groups and among animals the same momentous difference as in regard to the operation of food hunger. Animals tear their closest associates and even their sexual mates to pieces in the struggle for food; the member of the rudest and most primitive social group will starve rather than not share his food with his fellow-members. . . . So likewise in no human society, however primitive, is a lawless struggle for the possession of females to be found." That is not to say that jealousy does not exist, or that such practices as wife-stealing do not lead to bickering and even fighting, but such combats are seldom pushed to a mortal conclusion within the group.

When we come across instances of personal combat among primitive peoples, we shall frequently find that it is of the nature of a war to end war. Among Australian black-fellows, differences may be settled by letting the two mutually aggrieved parties take turns in a head-flogging match with clubs, each politely presenting himself as a target until the ill-feeling has been, literally, beaten out of both. Single combats have also been used as a means of settling group, or tribal feuds—a more sensible and convenient method than that of setting the whole of both communities to the task of murdering one another. Traces of such combats appear in the heroic legends of peoples high in the scale of civilization. The sensible and obvious course of allowing the crowned cuckold, whose domestic grievances have launched a thousand ships, to fight out his own battle with his wife's handsome lover, seems, according to Homer, to have dawned on the Greeks and Trojans after ten years of indecisive warfare, though this excellent arrangement is upset by divine interference. Then we have the story of the fight to a finish between two teams of three brothers apiece, to settle the question of supremacy be-

tween Rome and Alba, and a somewhat less formal conflict between Goliath, the Philistine champion, and David. This last story goes on to relate how, on the fall of the giant, the whole Philistine army bolts in confusion, pursued by the Hebrews.

The fact that we cannot take such legends nowadays at their face value, is no reason for discounting their significance. They must almost certainly have been founded on fact, and at any rate represent the sort of thing that might have been expected to happen, the sort of thing that is known to happen among people far more primitive than the countrymen of Agamemnon or of Saul. The first question that will occur to any modern reader is how such combats could ever have decided anything—how it was that ordinary human beings could have been brought to abide by a decision when it went against them, and why, in the absence of any sort of agreement, the Philistines should have taken to their heels on the fall even of their biggest champion.

Here we are brought up against the quality of human society that distinguishes it most from the associations of animals. The animal lives in a world of fact and believes no more than what his senses tell him; the world of Man is peopled by the creatures of his imagination. If an animal wants something, he takes it, and if two animals want the same thing, they quite frequently fight for it.

But man, with a brain specialized for using the hands on his now free pair of fore-limbs, is not content merely to take what appeals to his senses, and leave it at that. His brain is incapable of resting content without some sort of explanation of what comes to him through those five gates of knowledge. It is at once the strength and weakness of human nature that scarcely any man born has been able to leave a subject that really interests him, with the simple remark, "I don't know," or "I can't explain it."

Naturally, a phenomenon has got to be interesting enough to demand an explanation. To take one instance, it is inevitable that there should be a science of palmistry. Why is it that the ^{sin}-eases on every man's palm are just a little different from those lady ^{is} neighbour's? What do these differences signify? It might be primitive ^{of} any importance, and leave it at that. Human nature

abhors a vacuum, and to fill this particular vacuum, it has been necessary to invent palmistry. But there is no science of pedistry, because, though there are creases on the sole as well as the palm, the sole is out of sight and therefore creates no demand for the divination of its markings.

And Man, being an eminently practical animal, especially in his primitive state, is most interested in that kind of knowledge which enables him to accomplish his ends. He will not admit himself beaten, nor will he wait, perhaps for a few thousand years, for the kind of knowledge that comes by reasoned experiment. If he cannot work to his conclusions, he will jump to them. He is not content with positing a god or demon to account for the rain, he must have an art of magic to manage or propitiate such a Being. The negro tribe has its rain makers, to whom it is a matter of ordinary routine to perform feats of weather control that no meteorological expert would dream of attempting. There are German peasants, even to-day, who stimulate the productivity of the soil by conjugal embraces, at seed-time, in the open field. During the war, there were few soldiers who had not some private means of diverting from themselves the unlucky bullet.

In the individual combats that we have been considering, we see something fundamentally different from the fights of two stags for the hinds or two dogs about nothing in particular. They are definite attempts to enlist magical or divine powers in the settlement of the dispute. The Philistine champion cannot even rely on his armour and spear and gigantic thews to crush a practically unarmed shepherd lad; he must needs go through the ritual of cursing him by his gods, regardless of the fact that he is offering his forehead as a target for a well-slung pebble. When he pays the penalty for his rashness, none of his fellow-soldiers dreams of doubting that supernatural powers are working for their enemies, and that safety is only to be sought in flight.

In the team-duel of Roman and Alban brothers, a supernatural atmosphere is imparted to the whole proceedings. As Livy tells the story, the decision to fight is arrived at from motives in which piety and practical commonsense are intimately blended. The Alban dictator puts it to the Roman king, Tullus, that a pitched battle between their two armies will be one of frogs and

mice, with the powerful Etruscan confederation in the rôle of the owls. A ministering functionary is thereupon appointed by the Romans, his head and hair being touched with a pure blade of vervain. This personage strikes a sow with a large flint, praying Jupiter thus to smite the Roman people, in case of their failing to fulfil the conditions. The Albans perform a similar ritual and—the decision having gone against them—agree, as a matter of course, to play the part of a subordinate ally to the Romans. When, some time later, they show signs of repenting of the bargain, Tullus secures the person of their dictator and has him torn asunder by four horses, a piece of barbarity which, Livy assures us, is quite contrary to the Roman custom.

In all stages of civilization men will be found united in groups large or small, between whose members war is murder, and murder accursed. Intensely warlike communities, like the Assyrians or Spartans or Romans, for the very reason that their energies are sharpened to a fine point of aggression against the foreigner, are intolerant of strife between their own members. When Servilius Ahala, the Master of the Horse to Cincinnatus, slew one Maelius in the midst of the people, on the suspicion of aspiring to tyranny, it was in the name of the State, and his sentence of banishment was accordingly repealed. It would certainly not have occurred to him, or any other Roman, to have "called out" his man by way of settling a private difference.

No doubt individual combat was practised in Rome, after a certain period, not between her free citizens, but by prisoners and slaves under compulsion, and by professional gladiators as a trade. As we know from Juvenal, it was considered a mark of the deepest degradation for a gentleman to figure in the arena. In the same way the Japanese Bushido, or code of chivalry, though it prescribed the most elaborate rules of fair fighting—each combatant declaring his name and status to the other before joining battle—was intended to bind the vassals of the same lord in one indissoluble brotherhood. Among the fierce and cruel Aztecs, it was a capital offence so much as to offer a challenge.*

It is among the Nordic peoples that the practice of individual fighting has been most rife. We gather from Tacitus that the

* *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.* Art. "Duelling."

drinking bouts, of which the German tribes were so fond, not infrequently ended in bloody combat, and among the Vikings it was quite a regular way of settling quarrels to fight them out, in Iceland it being the practice to resort to a little island for the purpose. But with these sturdy individualists, the circle of affections was not likely to extend much beyond the bounds of the family, or jealously isolated homestead. The holm gang, as it was called in Iceland, was less of a duel between individuals, than a trial by battle between the champions of two separate though small communities, an affair of David and Goliath. And the fall of a champion was felt so far to be the affair of his immediate blood relations, as to lead to a state of war or blood feud between the two kins.

The assumption that, in the eyes of the gods, might is right, was the foundation of the judicial duel, or trial by combat, that was so widespread an institution among the barbarian tribes who burst the barriers of Rome, though the greatest of all their leaders, Theodoric, was civilized enough to suppress single combat among his own Ostrogoths. But there was this at least to be said for the practice in a primitive state of civilization, that where the only alternative to settling a dispute by battle was to employ rival teams of "oath helpers," hard fighting was at least likelier to give the better man the victory than hard swearing. King Gundebald of Burgundy is alleged to have sanctioned the judicial duel as a means of preventing his subjects from "attesting by oath what is certain, and perjuring themselves about what is uncertain."* One of the ancient Kings of Denmark, Frotho by name, justified the judicial duel on the ground that it was better to contend by blows than by words.

Nevertheless, the custom of the judicial duel was by no means universal, even among Teutonic peoples. There is no evidence of its having been introduced into England before it was brought over by the Normans, and even so it seems to have been considerably less honoured there, than in the more completely feudalized France. The most celebrated duel, of this sort, actually fought out in England, was that between Robert de Montfort and Henry, Earl of Essex, in the reign of Henry II. St. Edmund himself was supposed to have appeared to confound the guilty Earl. But

* *Laws of the Burgundians.* Ch. XIV.

it was not always necessary to fight in person—champions could be employed, and in Salisbury Cathedral there is an effigy of a Bishop's champion, to testify to the fact that bishops, like women, were considered capable of fighting by proxy. In France, at any rate, it was customary, in an accusation involving the death penalty, for both of the principals to await the issue, out of sight of the combat, with ropes conveniently attached to each of their necks in order that the losing party might be dealt with promptly by the hangman. To encourage the champion to put his best energies into the business, it was understood that he would share the fate of his employer in case of defeat.

All this seems an impudent enough travesty of justice, but there are probably few even of us moderns who, in watching the First Act of *Lohengrin*, have not been sufficiently transported into the medieval atmosphere to rejoice in the downfall of the wicked Frederick, in combat with Elsa's champion miraculously summoned to her aid. But in the reign of the mad King of France, Charles VI, a horrible exposure of the judicial combat was afforded by a solemn duel, in which a man accused of having captured a lady's favours by impersonating her husband, a returned crusader, was vanquished and hanged, and was afterwards proved to have been innocent.

The judicial combat did not survive the age of faith. Even in orthodox and chivalrous Spain, the last recorded instance of such a trial is in 1522. But in English law, the appeal of battle, like other unworkable abuses, was allowed to remain in theory long after it had lapsed in practice. So late as the reign of Elizabeth, a judicial combat was solemnly staged, with all the spectacular pageantry so dear to that age, and two hired champions, in picturesque attire, entered the lists; the gauntlet was duly thrown and taken up, and the most elaborate oaths administered against sorcery and other unfair practices. Unfortunately, it was perfectly well known that the case had, as a matter of fact, already been settled, and a human touch is added to the proceedings by the champion of the yielding party demurring at restoring his opponent's glove, and requesting in the true spirit of sportsmanship, to be allowed half a score of blows with his opponent for the diversion of the judges. The other wily profes-

sional, however, intimated that he had come for serious business or none at all, and so the matter ended.

As late as 1819, the dead letter had a momentary resurrection, when one, Abraham Thornton, who had already been acquitted of murdering a girl, on the charge being revived by the girl's brother, countered the accusation by offering legal battle, and thus effectually stopped the proceedings.

The duel, as an affair of individual honour, is not a primitive survival, but a modern innovation born of the Renaissance. It is the ordeal of battle with the religious element taken out. It is essentially different from the tournament, which was becoming a more and more spectacular and harmless form of aristocratic athleticism—such mishaps as the killing of Henry II of France by the lance of Montgomery being accidents such as might happen at polo nowadays.

It was in France, where medieval chivalry had attained its European zenith, that the duel also flourished most rankly. Under that worthless young man, Henry III, it raged like an epidemic among the nobility, and the King, who desired nothing better than excitement, heartily encouraged it. The practice, once begun, proved less easy to stop by responsible monarchs who did not care to see the flower of their nobility—and consequently the commissioned ranks of their armies—continually decimated. The atmosphere of French aristocratic society during the reign of Louis XIII is that depicted, with little exaggeration, by Dumas in *The Three Musketeers*. The principal topic of polite conversation was who had fought yesterday or who was to fight to-day. Even the institution of a Court of Honour, under royal auspices, had little effect in restraining the bellicose tendencies of noblemen who regarded the right to run each other through as one of the privileges of their order. In vain was duelling forbidden under pain of death—nobody believed that such a penalty would be exacted from gentlemen of honour. This proved a miscalculation when Cardinal Richelieu was engaged in his struggle for royal power against aristocratic anarchy. The most formidable of all noble swashbucklers, one Montmorency de Bouteville, deliberately showed his contempt for the anti-duelling edict by fighting under the Cardinal's windows. He had misjudged his

audience, and it was the axe and not the rapier that concluded de Bouteville's duelling career.

But the practice was only mitigated, and it was impossible to stamp it out altogether, though Louis XIV, by "beating down this false notion of honour," earned the commendation of Addison. According to Madame de Crequy, his firmness during the last seventeen years of his reign put a stop to duels altogether, though owing to the weakness of the Regent d'Orléans, they became frequent again after his death. The French duel survived even the Revolution, though Napoleon, when he received a challenge from the King of Sweden, very sensibly offered to send a fencing master to transact the business for him.

The duel was called, and in a very attenuated form may still be called, a European institution. But where it lingers to-day, it is as an occasional and anachronistic nuisance. In England, even in its palmiest days, it never took the same root as on the Continent. In Tudor times duels were rare, and James I, with his natural distaste for violence, did not smile upon personal combat. There was no exclusive noble caste in England, to frame a rigid code of honour like that which hedged the dignity of a French aristocrat. It was during the time that French influence, emanating from the court of Versailles, was most potent, that the duel flourished most among the English gentry, though even so it seems to have been principally confined to the services and the aristocratic society of the metropolis. Squire Western was the very reverse of a sword or pistol man, and the duelling valour of many an honest country squire probably did not exceed that of Bob Acres. It was only in the hard-living society of the Irish countryside that a meeting at some such gentlemanly distance as ten or fifteen paces was a matter of every-day occurrence among the lesser gentry.

Nevertheless the English duel was anything but child's play. In 172 combats, of which statistics were compiled by James Gilchrist in 1821, 69 persons were killed, and three of the duels were fatal to both combatants alike. The greatest of statesmen—Prime Ministers even—resorted to the pistol as a final argument in political discussion. But at no period of English history have we anything remotely comparable to the casualty list of some

4,000 noblemen, who are said to have fallen in France during the brief reign of Henry IV.

In England, the triumph of the middle class, signalized by the first Reform Bill, was fatal to the duel. Aristocratic notions of honour made no appeal to the black-coated city worker. His usually Puritan upbringing tended to make him regard them as sinful, his commonsense revolted from so stupid a method of argument as that of lead, and his sense of humour led him to regard the solemn paraphernalia of the duel as thoroughly ridiculous. Even the great Duke of Wellington only got himself laughed at for his bloodless duel with Lord Winchelsea at Battersea Fields, in which neither party took aim at the other. Dickens made the duel ridiculous in *Pickwick* and hateful in *Nickleby*. *Punch*, who was never tired of holding up the duel to hatred, ridicule, and contempt, published a horrible cartoon in which two aristocratic combatants are displayed in foolscaps, with a hangman's noose significantly dangling over one of their heads, while an undertaker hovers expectantly nigh, and a skeleton digs a grave. The Prince Consort threw his influence whole-heartedly into the anti-duelling cause; very early in his wife's reign it was finally decided that duelling was a form of murder and would be treated as such, and even in the army the practice completely disappeared, without any appreciable deterioration in the courage or manners of gentlemen.

On the Continent the survival of the duel was associated with two things—aristocratic exclusiveness and militarism. In republican France, where aristocracy was little accounted of, the once terrible privilege of personal combat degenerated into a harmless form of self-advertisement, largely practised by journalists, and held up to immortal ridicule by Mark Twain. In Germany, in the days of intensive militarism that preceded the Great War, the duel was a more serious matter, and though it received no sanction by either the civil or military code, the Emperor and military authorities so far favoured it that an officer might find himself confronted with the choice between imprisonment in a fortress, if he did fight, and ignominious retirement from the service if he refused. Besides which, the German students' duel, though officially frowned on by authority, was, as a matter of fact, intensively cultivated as a means of training the young gentlemen of

a Christian country to conform to the Nietzschean precept "Be hard." So thoroughly was the lesson learnt, that the strangest applications were made of the laws of honour. An officer was once reported to have run through a civilian, who had escaped from his custody, on the ground that, having once unsheathed his sword, he was bound in honour to have blood with it. At Zabern, a little town in Alsace, it became apparent that a partially fuddled officer, who had suffered the indignity of laughter, might avenge his honour at the expense of unarmed and even crippled civilians.

Historians are rightly chary of too sweeping moral verdicts, but surely if there were ever a case for regarding any social institution in the light of a disease, we are justified in such a diagnosis of the duel. The arguments used in its favour are usually of the most question-begging order. What Tennyson calls "the Christless creed that must have life for a blow," is sometimes supposed to be inseparable from any aristocracy worthy the name. But the grandest aristocracy the world has ever seen, the Roman patrician class whose firmness broke even Hannibal, were strangers to the duel. The superb aristocracy of Venice were no duellists in the days when they held the gorgeous East in fee, though in the last stages of Venice's decline, when she had become a mere pleasure city, they were no doubt as free with their rapiers and pistols as any other gentlemen of the time.

It has been alleged that a militant sense of personal honour is necessary to inculcate a high standard of courage, that a class of duellists will provide better officers than a class of non-duellists. Here, again, we are dealing with pure assertion. We do not believe that any candid survivor of the gallant German officer class, which led the invasion of France in 1914, would go so far as to claim for it any average superiority in courage over the officers of the British regular army, who retreated from Mons and were all but wiped out in front of Ypres. Nor would Wellington, could he come back from the dead, claim that the playing fields of Eton—by which, if he used the expression at all, he meant the old "milling ground"—are less a nursery of courage now that a boy can no longer be asked if he will take a licking, or, when he left school, receive an invitation to "pistols for two" in the we any¹ours of the morning.

No doubt the gentlemen of France, in the days of the Cardinals, lacked nothing for gallantry, but it is probable that the finest army of that time was constituted by Fairfax's and Cromwell's New Model, that hunted Rupert's gentlemen of honour like hares, and whose prowess against the Spanish infantry, the finest in Europe, excited the generous admiration of Turenne. "Our men," reported one of their commanders, "rejoice greatly when they see the enemy." And yet, among the Saints of God, the duel would not have been a tolerated institution. They were more concerned about rightness with God than honour among men.

And then—did the duel always work in the way it was intended? It might, in some cases, tend to improve the standard of manners, by rendering any offender liable to be called out for ungentlemanly conduct. But on the other hand, it had the effect of conferring a free licence on any blackguard, who happened to be an expert swordsman, or a dead shot, to commit such offences with impunity. Charles II's Duke of Buckingham, for instance, carried on a shameless intrigue with the wife of the elderly Lord Shrewsbury, and succeeded in adding what was practically murder to adultery by remarking in public that it was no sport cuffing Shrewsbury, because he had not spirit enough to resent it. At the subsequent, and fatal duel, it is said that her Ladyship was present, disguised as a page. The tyranny of the bully was, in fact, an inevitable consequence of the duel.

Nor need we assume that because gentlemen were compelled to stand on the point of honour on pain of social ostracism, that they at all welcomed the necessity. There must have been many men of formal honour, even in the palmiest duelling days, who secretly cared even more about the preservation of their skins. The anxiety that was almost invariably displayed to secure a peaceful settlement and the innumerable duels that failed to materialize give some warrant for such a conclusion. There is a delightful story of the way in which a notorious bully and scoundrel, called Fighting Fitzgerald, secured election to the most select club in London, Brookes's. He first buttonholed a member who, though an admiral, dared not refuse a request to put him up for membership. One blackball was sufficient for rejection, so, after some anxious consultation by the club committee, it was arranged

that the one black ball should be forthcoming. The members had, however, reckoned without Fitzgerald, who, striding into the committee room, enquired in the most amiable manner from each separate member whether he had been responsible for the black-ball, and on receiving a negative answer from everybody, declared—without overt opposition—that the thing was palpably a mistake and that he was therefore elected.* But in case any halo of romance may be believed to invest this hero of the pistol, it may be as well to mention that he was suspected of having fought with bullet-proof armour underneath his clothes.

The nearer, in fact, we get to the actual records of the duel, the more sordid and the less romantic does the whole thing seem. The first of the celebrated French duels is remembered by the foul blow, the "*coup de Jarnac*," that gave the victory. Lord Byron stabbed Mr. Chaworth in the stomach, when that gentleman was under the impression that his Lordship was wounded, and was enquiring anxiously about it. The crack shot Martin was put up to end the inconvenient career of John Wilkes. Poor, short-sighted Mr. Colclough, at a disputed Irish election in 1810, was shot dead by the rival candidate, Mr. Alcock, for no better reason than that some of Mr. Alcock's tenants, who had not even been canvassed, wanted to give Mr. Colclough their votes. Mr. Alcock himself went mad subsequently of remorse, and his sister, who had been attached to Mr. Colclough, died of grief. Instances of the same sort could be multiplied indefinitely.

Even assuming that courage may be fostered by the practice of duelling, it may be doubted whether that kind of courage is at all desirable. The honour that seeks life for a blow, or even for an insult, is obviously rooted in the most extreme and implacable egotism. It is the negation of the team spirit. It is not only definitely anti-social, but its value even as a training for war is doubtful. Gentlemen with hyper-sensitive notions of their own dignity are likely to make insubordinate officers—the duelling spirit does not work for co-operation. Every schoolboy has heard of the Roman consul whose son, disregarding a standing order, successfully assayed the part of David against a hectoring Gaulish Goliath. The consul paid due honour to his son's

* There is another version of this story that makes Fitzgerald accomplish the highly improbable feat of slicing off a member's nose.

prowess, but also had him executed for disobedience. Even in France, the stronghold of the duel, the most responsible rulers set their faces against it. No statesmen were more solicitous for the glory of French arms than Richelieu and Louis XIV; none fought more sternly against that very practice by which a high courage was supposed to be engendered. As for Napoleon, he appears to have regarded the duel with the contempt of the professional soldier for the amateur.

The history of the duel follows a course curiously similar to that of war between communities. It was neither primeval nor universal. It started from religious and was continued for secular motives. It was supported by arguments not essentially different from those that were used to bolster up war. The same high-falutin' sentimentality was employed about personal as about national honour. The egotism of the individual was hedged about with a sanctity as inviolable as invests that of the hundred millions. The "*Nemo me impune lacessit*" of the duellist corresponded to the "*Civis Romanus sum*" of aggressive patriotism.

If duelling may be diagnosed as a disease, it is possible that war may be found to differ from it only as small-pox differs from chicken-pox, by its greater virulence and mortality. But there is this lesson that we may learn from the duel. The evil is one that can be, and in certain nations has been, mastered and extirpated. What England has done for individual, the world may do for collective combat.

CHAPTER V

THE BLOOD FEUD

WARFARE between individuals plays a comparatively small part in human affairs. So far from being necessary to social life, the duel turns out to be a sporadic, artificial and diseased growth upon it. From a psychological standpoint, this is just what we should expect. For the duel corresponds to that state of arrested mental development that is known as Narcissism or self-love. Normally the affections should go on expanding in a continually widening circle, for it is as normal to grow in love as it is to grow in stature—"we live not for ourselves alone."

It is seldom that the expanding circle stops and the circumference hardens at the limits of individual personality. Such a thing as a pure egotist is as inconceivable as a man would be who had stopped growing at three. But the true imperfection of human nature—the original sin—consists in the fact that the expansion stops and the circumference hardens somewhere, so that love only functions within the limits of quite a small group, and without reign, suspicion, fear, and ill-will, culminating in war.

And yet there is a sense in which all wars—certainly among primitive peoples—may be classed as duels, and all love as self-love. For what is the essence of love but a feeling of one-ness with the beloved? Take the most primitive and universal form of all, that of a parent for its offspring. To realize the feelings of a mother animal, we must visualize her young ones as a detached part of herself. It is probable that the timid ewe who faces up to a dog in defence of her lamb, has some dim consciousness of acting in her own self-defence, and that the silver fox who, in captivity, devours her litter, does so from a literal desire to get her own back. When the consciousness of identity dwindles to vanishing point, the parent loses interest in its offspring. It needs the human imagination to fix the parental relation per-

manently in the mind, and not only to fix, but to extend it, until men fall down before the creatures of their own hands and minds and cry "Mother" or "Father."

Again, in such intimate associations as that of the hive or ants' nest, we hardly know whether we are dealing with a multitude of separate individuals, or whether this is not one gigantic individual whose units move freely instead of being stuck together, like colony-animals in a lower order of life.

In all such speculations it is hard to avoid the mistake of certain story-tellers and artists who will treat animals as if they were like-minded with ourselves. We ask in vain what a bee thinks he is in relation to the hive or a ewe in relation to her lamb. They don't think about it at all, and if they could tell us why they act as they do, it would be in the words of Martin Luther—"I cannot do otherwise—God help me!" It is only Man who seeks for explanations. The savage, whose life is regulated by an all-embracing tyranny of custom and taboo, knows, or fancies he knows, either what the custom avails him, or what god or power has sanctioned it.

An animal feels, in a way difficult for us to conceive, some sort of oneness with its family or herd-mates. But a man knows why he is at one with his neighbour, and is able to supplement the herd instinct by reasons, often absurd in themselves, but justified by the conduct to which they lead. He evolves a primitive kind of physiology, based upon the idea that the blood is the life, and that people descended from the same ancestor have the same blood, and therefore the same life. He may widen the circle of this blood relationship by some such simple process of transfusion, as when two men mingle a few drops of their blood in some liquid, and proceed to drink it. Or a group of men may take an entirely fictitious ancestor who need not even be human, as when certain groups of Indians call themselves bears, and become as appropriately surly as simple faith is capable of making these not naturally too urbane specimens of humanity.

It is no part of our province to trench on that of the Frazers and Westermarcks, the Sumners and Durkheims, who have charted the fantastic but precise folk-ways trodden by primitive men. All that we are concerned with is the fact that Man, as soon as he develops a brain to realize the possibilities of his spare

pair of fore-limbs, uses it for the purpose of surrounding himself with a world of the most complicated make-believe, and in inventing for himself a minute tyranny of imaginary powers and forces, which are about his path and about his bed, spying out all his ways, and making his whole life one endless routine of customs to observe and taboos to avoid in every conceivable situation. It might appear that the prime effect of awakening reason has been to end reason.

And yet it was plainly necessary that human development should pass through such a phase before climbing to the heights of civilization. For primitive man, a scientific attitude would have been impossible. He could not afford to wait upon the results of experiment. He found himself pitchforked into a universe of which he had to furnish some sort of a working explanation, in which he had to determine for himself a practicable way of life, and having determined it, to fix it in his mind and make it habitual. It is possible that the most advanced modern scientists may be fitting their conclusions into the framework of just such a provisional and make-believe universe as that of the savage, and that their normal reaction against anything "supernormal" may recall that of the medicine man against the doctor. We ourselves, when we treat primitive make-believe as if it were pure fiction with no basis of fact, are honouring the same pragmatically defensible convention.

We may say, therefore, that primitive human societies differ from those of animals in being founded on a basis of highly imaginative fiction. The most civilized societies, those which have led the march of human progress, have been those which have most successfully contrived to play this game of inventing irrational motives for socially desirable actions.

Thus man is not only a tool-making but a group-making animal, and a man's group life may be a thing of intricate complication. He may conceivably belong to two or three totem fellowships and have a quite distinct family or clan life, or, like Disraeli, he may be at once a loyal Jew and a patriotic Englishman. The groups to which he belongs may include or exclude or overlap one another, and raise the most intricate problems of divided allegiance, but the principle remains the same, that the group constitutes the circle within which a man's affections and personality

are free to expand. He is one with it, as a cell is one with the body.

So far as we can set before ourselves an ideal of perfect and harmonious development, it would be one of love continually widening its borders until the circumference of the circle was wide enough to include the whole of that space-time which embraces the universe. The only God that will satisfy a developed consciousness will be the spirit of creative love, and the Heaven at the end of time, that the whole universe is in travail to realize, a state of things wherein all individuality is heightened to god-head, and God, who is love, is all in all.

But the course of love, which is that of evolution, does not run smooth, and there is no uniform or harmonious expansion. It would seem as if love were a form of spiritual energy that required to be generated in closed chambers. Neither in individual nor in social life do we find it expanding continuously. We fall in love—we do not glide into it. If we are healthy in spirit, our affections from time to time take a leap forward—though without any necessary weakening of the old loves. We proceed not harmoniously but catastrophically from family affection through the passionate attachments and loyalties of our school days, to the love of a youth for a maid, and of a man for his mate, and of a parent for his children. But unless we are very fortunate, the process gets held up somewhere; as in an imperfectly constructed machine, something seems to stick, and when it is not a machine but a mind, we have repressions and perversions and a life poisoned or stunted.

It is the same in social life. If the various human associations are generators of love within their own limits, they are also generators of hatred for anything outside them. It comes hard for a man to be at one with his neighbours without being at variance with everybody else. It is only a wisdom almost superhuman that is capable of extending the term neighbour to include the Samaritan and the stranger and the enemy.

We must accept it as a law of human nature that love, before it can expand, needs to be generated and fostered intensively within limits. The intensest love of all, that between the sexes, attains its noblest development when the group is limited to two, unless we are to accept Shelley's romantic dictum:

"True love in this differs from gold and clay,
That to divide is not to take away."

And accepted it can be, as an ultimate ideal, though Shelley's own attempt to put it into practice can hardly be said to have been an unqualified success. But we cannot attain the greater love by leaving out the lesser. The lover who distributes his caresses impartially is a figure of fun; the cosmopolite who wants to annihilate patriotism, instead of seeking to realize it in service and crown it with the love of humanity, is more likely to be numbered among the cranks than among the saviours:

"That man's the best cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best."

But there is this difficulty to be faced—the very intensity of the love or loyalty generated within any human society, whether the society of two consecrated before the altar, or the society of many millions typified by the flag, tends to fix more rigidly the barriers to love's further expansion. The fiercest loyalties of history have been the most exclusive. The very devotion of a Highlander to his chief might easily make him a rebellious subject to his king, and it is in countries like Fascist Italy, where patriotism is cultivated as the supreme ideal of human life, that the efforts of mankind to transcend patriotism in the cause of humanity are most frowned upon.

This might well be an unreconcileable paradox, if mankind were doomed to go on in the future as it has in the past, trusting to its instincts, and taking its own make-believe for reality. But we have reached that stage at which it is incumbent upon civilized Man to take conscious control of his own destinies, in the light of reason and experience. Hitherto we have been, in Fiona Macleod's words, as "sheep led by an unknown shepherd." We have evolved as we have grown, without the thought of adding a cubit to our stature. We have studied evolution as we have observed the motions of the stars, or as we might watch the unfolding of a drama while we sit passive in our seats. But now that the childhood of our race is over, it is our part to determine and not to accept our destinies. If we observe, it is only in order that we may command. The evolution of the past is what has hap-

pened; the evolution of the future shall be what we choose to happen. Otherwise there is likely to be no evolution at all, but dissolution and the night of mankind.

If we were to visualize this taking control by mankind of its own destinies as some unprecedented and revolutionary departure, we might well despair of its ever being made. But the childhood of mankind has been one long process of education for this very end. From the dimmest twilight of history, we find men, according to what lights they have had, endeavouring to control the destinies of the groups, gradually increasing in size, into which they have formed themselves. The men, for instance, who call themselves bears, and perhaps trace their descent from some grand primeval Bruin, will make it their business to become good bears. They will have a standard of bearishness to live up to; there may be an exacting initiation for aspirants to bearhood.

However benighted a common faith may be, it is Man's best attempt to explain his environment to himself, with a view to controlling it by custom. The negroes who, under the guidance of their witch doctors, take arms against the rain cloud, are doing ignorantly and in isolated groups what the whole of mankind may do, with exact knowledge and in the light of historic experience, against the menace of an environment that man himself has rendered incalculably more dangerous than that of the savage. It is no longer a question of the group or family managing its own affairs—even patriotism is not enough. Mankind is ripe to become consciously alive, and we, its members, to fulfil our individualities in that supreme communion of each with all, which is the patriotism of the species.

Such a thing as a union of souls, a spiritual communion even of the elect, was inconceivable to the primitive mind. It demanded something matter-of-fact and concrete as a basis of union. Men must not only be of the same spirit, but actually of the same substance—most commonly of the same blood. The savage is not so far from the conclusion of the latest medical science when he believes that the blood is the life, though his applications of the principle are not such as would find favour in Harley Street. In Ashanti it used to be customary to wash the grinning skeleton of a chief from time to time with the blood of some freshly slain

human victim, with the idea of clothing that important mortal with a perpetually renewed immortality.

To be of the same blood, or of the same substance, is therefore essential to unity. The Athanasian Creed is merely giving the most sublime expression of this idea when it explains the dual nature of Christ—"God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and man, of the Substance of his Mother, born in the world." The words attributed to Christ are founded on a belief that at one time must have been well-nigh universal, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him." Such words might have been used by the humblest member of the most primitive social group. It has been the faith no less of cannibals and head-hunters than of saints.

One in substance—one in spirit. It would be hard to say where the one conception ends and the other begins, or how far the two overlap and shade into each other. In that strange wonderland of fictions, exact yet fantastic, born of the primitive imagination, we are tempted to generalize and simplify beyond all warrant, in order to make sense. To say simply that the blood is the life is altogether too facile an abstraction from the vast and tangled complex of savage beliefs. Even the name may take the place of the blood as the most important thing about a man—the possession of a common name may be enough to form a bond of social unity. Totem and family claims may cut across each other. "Besides marriage," says Dr. Westermarck, "local proximity and a common descent, a common worship may tie people together into a social union, but," he goes on to add, "among savages a religious community generally coincides with a community of some other kind." *

The upshot seems to be that a savage who knows his business is capable of inventing a fiction to justify any line of action to which his native commonsense may prompt him. Oscar Wilde, in his defence of lying, as an art, might, had he been so informed and disposed, have put up an excellent case for the lie as the source of all progress. Nonsense, the more extravagant the better, is the mother of sense, and Wisdom is justified of all her fictions.

Nor are the benefits of the lie the monopoly of savage com-

* *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas.* Vol. II, pp. 209-10.

munities. With the advance of civilization the fictions become more subtle, but not therefore less dominant. The two great systems of world law, English and Roman, have grown up upon a diet of solemn make-believe. The whole organization of modern business is founded upon a basis of fictitious values. Science itself is becoming more and more conscious of its ultimate foundations being such stuff as dreams are made on, while as for religions, the one thing on which all orthodox people are agreed is that all other orthodoxies repose upon a basis of pious fiction. Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed! Patriotism, courtesy, politics—even love: strip them of their fictions, and what remains?

It will now be seen that those social repressions, which cause love to limit its circumference to the bounds of some petty community, are the direct result of a too great scrupulousness or lack of imagination. The most backward and unprogressive communities are those in which the blood bond has been interpreted with grim literalness, and which have pushed family or clan loyalty to its logical conclusion. On the North-West Frontiers of India, there are family or clan groups, each in its own mountain fastness or valley, whose blood feuds go on, with a monotonous alternation of murder, from generation to generation. The blood is the life of the community; blood calls for blood:

"Abel's blood for vengeance
Pleaded to the skies."

Murder, under such circumstances, is no longer a crime, but a pious duty.

In an Indian frontier station, an English lady used to employ a shy and singularly gentle boy, a Pathan, for the purpose of wheeling about the baby. One day this boy came to her to request six months' leave. He was now, he explained, of an age to perform the duty imposed on him of maintaining the family honour in a probably immemorial exchange of murders. His mistress never expected to see him again, but sure enough, at the end of six months, he turned up, having duly disposed of his man, and begged to be allowed to resume his custodianship of the perambulator.

In such an atmosphere as this, civilization cannot breathe. Men

whose chief thoughts are given to homicide or self-preservation are not likely to develop any skill in industry or the arts. It will be next to impossible to bind them into any more comprehensive union than that of their own blood-group. There is—perhaps fortunately for England—no country more obstinately backward than Afghanistan, where the tribal feud flourishes supreme, and its pursuit is a sacred duty. Another country where the blood feud has been allowed to flourish unchecked has been Morocco, a fact that largely accounts for that country falling so easy a victim to European exploitation. As Sir Arthur Nicolson wrote in 1896:

"I have been in most Oriental countries, but I have never seen such complete darkness as reigns here . . . once the rickety edifice gets the slightest push, all will come down. From what I hear the Moors would welcome any European invader." *

Among the Bedouin Arabs, it is a point of tribal honour to pursue every feud to the bitter end, without any sort of composition. The terror of starting a vendetta has, however, a certain effect in restricting homicide, even in battle.

Just as the conception of individual honour that sanctions the duel has been found a nuisance by civilized communities, so also has the chastity of family honour that demands blood for blood. The commonsense of most peoples has decided that it is possible to commute vengeance for cash down, or its equivalent in goods. Among the Nordic peoples, especially, the simple device was adopted of a blood tariff, every man's life being assessed at so much according to his rank, and the bereaved family having the right to confront the homicide with the literal alternative of "your money or your life." The earliest English laws are such tariffs codified. In the Norse sagas we read of the brothers of a murdered man being considerably annoyed at hearing that the murder had been avenged before their arrival, and that therefore they were unable to claim the very handsome windfall that would otherwise have been their portion. This highly unromantic device had at least the effect of preventing each single homicide from perpetuating itself in a vendetta.

It was where the cult of family or clan honour was most strictly maintained that anything like ordered government was

* *Lord Carnock*, by Harold Nicolson, p. 119.

slowest in getting itself established. The practical, not to say unscrupulous, political genius of the English, was not long in reducing the whole clan principle to an absurdity. What a man called his family, or rather brotherhood, might be an entirely artificial group, perhaps of ten men who, for police purposes, were supposed to answer for one another's actions. It might take the form of a gild or club. Human groupings were less of sacred bonds than matters of pure convenience. And so, by a series of expedients and fictions, was patched together the British Constitution.

With the Celtic peoples, on the other hand, the blood tie was really sacred, and family or clan logic was pushed to the bitter conclusion. Anybody who knows Ireland, even to-day, will realize how very much more seriously a man's family is taken there than in England. To an Irishman, to say that a man is an O'Connor, or a Parnell, or an O'Brien, is to tell you a good deal about him. To an Englishman, though it may be more important to be a Smythe than a Smith, or a Howard Smith than a common Smith, it is a matter of perfect indifference whether you are Smith, Brown or Robinson. It was the obstinate loyalty of the medieval Irish to their septs or clans, and to little else, that enabled a few Anglo-Norman conquistadors to lay the country at their feet, and it needed centuries of alien oppression to school the Irish into whatever they may now possess of political self-help.

There is a similar story to tell of mountainous and Celtic Wales, where a gentleman used to include the whole of his genealogy in his name, Ap This following Ap That in never-ending series, till Henry VIII's judges, who had other things to do than to listen to the pedigrees of their jurymen, put a stop to the practice, "whereby," as whimsical Bishop Fuller remarks, "much time is saved for other employment, especially in winter when the days be short."

In Scotland, family and clan loyalty was the curse of the country, until Butcher Cumberland and the Hanoverian Government stamped out every vestige of tribal independence, and Chatham found a better employment for Highland warriors than the kind of thing travestied in *The Massacre of Macpherson*. One has only to read any of the Border Ballads to realize the atmosphere of savage anarchy engendered by perpetual feuds and vendettas.

It was into the mouth of a Border lord, though an English one, that Shakespeare, whose sociological insight is so weirdly accurate whether he is dealing with Moors or Veronese or Scots or Frenchmen, puts the following answer to a child's prayer for mercy:

"Had I thy brethren here, their lives and thine
 Were not revenge sufficient unto me,
 No, if I digged up they forefathers' bones,
 And hung their rotten coffins up in chains,
 It could not slake mine ire, nor ease my wrath,
 The sight of any of the House of York
 Is as a fury to torment my soul,
 And till I root out their accursed line,
 And leave not one alive, I live in Hell.
 Therefore—"

It is the same string that is harped on with an even grimmer intensity in:

"I went down to the water side,
 None but my foe to be my guide,
 None but my foe to be my guide
 On fair Kirkconnell Lea.

"I lighted down my sword to dra'
 I hackit him in pieces sma'
 I hackit him in pieces sma'."

There is something in the deliberate repetition of that last line that makes one shudder.

The same note reaches us from old Japan, with its intense consecration of clan loyalty. In that strangely neglected book of translations from the Japanese, called *Sword and Blossom Poems*, there is one addressed by a clan warrior to his two swords, dragons in a casket, by whose cries his slumbers are disturbed. "Be still," he bids them, not yet, not yet, dawns the day of release:

"Moment by moment it is drawing near,
 Be silent, do ye deem that I forget?"

The day, doubtless, for "hacking in pieces sma'."

But the Japanese, though some of us can remember a time when they were regarded in Europe as merely comic and picturesque little people, had, like the Scots, an intense underlying

practicality, and they possessed, in the cult of their God-Emperor, the elements of a patriotism that, when the time came, enabled them to consign, with extraordinary rapidity, their ancient system of clan loyalty to the limbo of romantic superstitions.

Sooner or later there comes a time, among all progressive peoples, when the blood feud, or any sort of group conflict within the State, becomes a nuisance to be superseded as the duel has been superseded. This is less likely to be effected by abolishing the idea of blood vengeance, than by what we should now call sublimating it. We can see this idea realized most completely and logically among the Hebrews. The uncompromising moral logic of this people, like that of many Arab tribes, could not stoop to the easy expedient of commuting murder for cash. Up to the time of David, at least, though murder was a crime against Jehovah, the business of avenging it was that of the murdered man's family group, who supplied the Avenger of Blood. The vendetta was, however, barred, by making the Avenger himself immune from vengeance, and besides this, conveniently accessible Cities of Refuge were provided, three on each side of the Jordan, where the shedder of blood could be immune until at least such time as the elders of the city had enquired into the measure of his guilt.

But gradually the idea gained ground that Jehovah, who was Himself in course of evolution from a tribal into a universal God, was the Avenger of all blood. "Thou shalt do no murder" was the simple and sublime statement of His will. "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay," and in the drama of Job, which, whatever its origin, was incorporated into the Hebrew scriptures, the hero says of Jehovah, "I know that my Avenger [translated, in the Authorized Version, Redeemer] liveth."

The effect of this was, of course, to supersede the old Avenger of family blood, and to transfer his functions to the representatives of the Supreme Avenger, the constituted authorities of an intensely theocratic state. But a more remarkable goal was yet to be reached. For the Jewish moral genius was not to be confined within racial or national limits. The greatest of the Prophets and Rabbis were capable of conceiving of their God as the Father of the whole human family, and the Avenger of all blood. With Paul, who in one sense may be regarded as the last and

greatest of the Prophets, the Jew who consummated Judaism by raising it high above the Judaic plane, God becomes the avenger of all sin. The blood-guiltiness that lies on the whole human race cannot be compounded even by the symbolic blood of bulls and goats. Only the blood of a divine victim is capable of paying the debt. This victim is identified by Paul with Jesus of Nazareth. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

The Greeks, with their intellectual adventurousness and their greater elasticity of mind, attained an even more advanced standpoint. The blood feud must have flourished among the pre-historic Greeks, and in Homer there are frequent references to it, as well as to the custom of accepting a *pome*, or weregild, in liquidation. The curse that rested on the House of Atreus was one of blood calling for blood, of a series of avengers who slay the slayer and shall themselves be slain.

It is this legend that Æschylus uses as a vehicle for a veritable moral revolution. The problem of his great trilogy of dramas is how to supersede the blood feud. In that palace at Argos, it might well seem hopeless. The god-intoxicated Cassandra sees it haunted by avenging spirits, she shudders on the threshold at the reek of blood, blood horribly alive and crying from the ground, blood whose flow may never be staunched, so long as there are living arteries to replenish it. And when, father having slain daughter, wife husband, and son mother, a human avenger fails, the feud is taken up by the avenging spirits, the Furies, and—as Professor Gilbert Murray shows—by Mother Earth herself. This may be taken as the Greek equivalent of "Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord."

But now the young gods of a new dispensation, Athene and Apollo, step in. The avenging spirits of the blood feud are baulked of their prey. The voice of reason and forgiveness prevails against the blind crying from the ground. But the ancient avengers are not robbed of their honour. By paternal inspiration, Athene apportions them a dwelling within her own fairest of cities; no longer are they associated with the vendetta, but with the State itself. The larger love has prevailed, even if it is confined by city walls or the bounds of little Attica. The

Furies have become the Eumenides, and family honour yields to civic patriotism. And yet the family bond in the Greek city could be one of tenderness and constancy, no less so because vengeance was no longer a family duty, except in so far as the next-of-kin was expected to appear as prosecutor in cases of homicide.

In Rome, the principle of the blood feud was wiped out even more completely than at Athens, and its traces are less obvious. But it is certain that it existed in primitive Italy, as it did in primitive Greece, and in fact we have a typically Roman parallel to the *Eumenides* in a legend recorded by Plutarch. Some brig- and kinsmen of King Tatius, the Sabine, who reigned jointly with Romulus, had killed the ambassadors of Laurentum, and the relations of the victims, finding that Tatius intended to shuffle out of giving due redress, murdered him at a sacrifice. Romulus, like the commonsense Roman he was, contented himself with giving his colleague a splendid funeral, saying that one murder was requited with another. This rough and ready solution was not enough for the avenging gods, and both Rome and Laurentum were smitten with plague. It was not till Romulus had sought out and punished the murderers that he was able to purify the two cities by lustrations. In other words, the justice administered by the State had come to supplant the private vengeance of the blood feud.

Rome is peculiarly an instance of the truth that the lesser love may find not its annihilation, but its fulfillment, in the triumph of the greater. It is true that it was the duty of every Roman to allow no conflict of family and State in his affections. The *res publica* must always come first—that is the moral of countless legends. When the son of Fabius Maximus was consul, the father, wishing to prove him, approached him on horseback, only to be ordered sternly, by a lictor, to dismount. "Yes, my son," said the grand old "Dawdler," embracing him, "you do well. . . . This was the way by which we and our forefathers advanced the dignity of Rome, preferring ever her honour and service to our own fathers and children."

And yet there was never a state in which family life played a more vital part than in the Republican Rome that conquered Italy, broke Carthage, and made the Mediterranean what the Nile

and Euphrates had been to the Empires in their basins. The Roman regarded himself far less as an individual than as a family man. The greater gods, whose worship was a matter of civic piety, were less near to his heart than his Lar, or home-god, and his Di Penates, or store-cupboard gods. It is this family worship that lingered longest and died hardest of any part of the ancient Roman religion. Though the authority of the father was absolute at law, the Roman matron, who inherited her status from the matriarchal Etruscans, occupied a position of importance and dignity far beyond that of the Greek housewife. Family life may be said to have taken on an added depth and fullness by the family having ceased to become a self-sufficient and combatant unit.

As, with advancing civilization, the circle of affections has widened, the State has everywhere come to take over the functions of vengeance that were formerly exercised by the kindred, or clan. Among Nordic peoples we soon find developing the idea of a peace—the King's "frith," or the great nobleman's "grith," as they were called in England—superseding the old blood-peace that prevailed within the family, and making war within its limits an offence against the Sovereign. The process of civilization is, in fact, one of perpetually widening peace. Just as individuals were prevented from fighting one another within the limits of the family, so were families or clans prevented from waging war within the limits of the state or city.

The expansion of love may, indeed, be retarded by other forms of repression than those that result in physical combat. It has been the bane, politically, of Chinese civilization, that the tremendous emphasis laid on filial and family piety, particularly in the Confucian philosophy, has stunted the growth of public spirit. Confucius himself believed that a son ought to shield even a criminal father from justice, and a father his son, a conception of virtue which, as Mr. Bertrand Russell points out, contrasts strongly with the Roman.* The corruption and avarice that are the besetting sins of public life in China, arise from a genuine conviction that the first duty even of a ruler or official is to his own family.

* *The Problem of China*, p. 40.

Progress in civilization, if it is to be beneficent, must be harmonious. The wider love must not annihilate the narrower, nor the narrower love obstruct or contradict the wider. As in the ancient Roman State family loyalty served as the foundation for loyal citizenship, so we may believe that patriotism will only attain its full stature as part of a world loyalty.

The means by which this development is accomplished are not easily comprehended in any simple generalization. But we may say that imagination has played a greater ostensible part in its accomplishment than either reason or convenience. The idea of even parents and children being of the same blood is, in the light of medical science, a pure fallacy—how much more unreal is the bond created by two men mingling a few drops of their blood in the wine-cup, or by numberless similar ceremonies! The king's peace is no part of a social contract, but a taboo; he is hedged by such divinity—the hedge coinciding with the boundaries of his sway—that to shed blood within its confines becomes a kind of sacrilege, *lèse-majesté*.

This idea of the peace of a more or less divine King is capable of receiving a world-wide application. The *pax Romana*, under a God-Emperor, was conceived of as embracing the whole civilized world. The grandest statement of the Roman ideal took the form of "*pacis imponere morem*"—"to impose the habit of peace." The Emperor Marcus Aurelius would have altered the poet's "dear city of Cecrops" to "dear city of God." And among the Hebrews, the development of a tribal into a world God gave rise to the notion of a God's peace that should cause swords to be beaten to ploughshares and the wolf to lie down with the lamb. A ruler should come forth, a Prince of Peace, of the line of David, and in his name should the Gentiles trust; nation should not lift sword against nation any more. A Messiah did come who proclaimed a peace not imposed by conquest, but born in the soul, the Peace of God that passeth all understanding. For that He was crucified.

The blood bond and blood feud were not abolished by the widening of peace beyond the limits of the family. Fictions just as preposterous as those of any savage have been invented to bind together enormous hordes of men running into eight and even into nine figures. Round-headed Germans imagining themselves

to be of pure Nordic stock, modern Italians posing as ancient Romans, Slavs, intoxicated with the Slavishness of pure Slavism, Englishmen talking about their mixed Blood as if it qualified them for the membership of a superior breed within, or above, the Law, hundred-per-cent Americans, compounded of all the racial stocks in Europe, may be witnessed to-day, intoxicated by mass suggestion, engaged in strenuously bringing up to date, and monstrously inflating, the ancient fellowship of blood with its corollary of the blood feud. It remains to be seen whether a Peace of God is capable of being evolved that shall transcend these lesser loves, ennobling and fulfilling them, while it binds them together, not in discord, but in the harmony of the love that moves the sun and the other stars.

We have concentrated our attention on the blood union because it is the commonest and most significant of those circles of human association in which love is generated, and in which it is confined and prevented from expanding. We do not propose to survey the various other groups in which love, of a sort, is engendered—even if it should only result in the proverbial honour among thieves. The growth of secret societies, among the most primitive as well as amongst the most advanced peoples, would in itself form one of the most fascinating chapters of human history. There are associations that may be classed as tumours or diseased growths on the social organism, gangs of robbers, assassins, pirates. And yet the Moorish pirates, the scourge of the Mediterranean, not to speak of the High Seas, were inspired by something of the ardour of crusaders—their calling was invested with an odour of Moslem sanctity. As for the Elizabethan sea-dogs, shall we call them patriots, or champions of the Reformed Faith, or pirates—or all three? It would be an interesting study to pursue love to its lowest human depths, and find what rudimentary and perverted forms of it hold together gangs of hooligans, poachers, race-course crooks, and gunmen.

Just as we found self-love blossoming into honour and giving birth to the duel, so we find group love making a virtue of its limitations and becoming a menace to civilization. The tragedy of Capulet and Montague demands a wider setting than that of one Italian town. Nothing less will suffice for it than the Dear City of God, in whose streets

"Our Prince expressly hath
Forbidden bandying,"

whether we are to visualize that Prince as an individual, or as the still, small voice of human reason.

CHAPTER VI

WHY FIGHT?

DR. MACDOUGALL, the psychologist, has a story to tell of how Frenchman and German met at point of steel, and how, as one of them plunged his bayonet into the other's stomach, the dying man said, in a cultured accent and in the other's language, "See what you have done to me." *

One can well believe that the survivor of this experience will be haunted to his dying day by a question that must have occurred to many a student of human history:

"Why is it that men, possessed of the same needs and battling with the same forces of nature, should devote their energies not to helping but to injuring and destroying one another?"

It seems the more strange when we reflect that Man is not originally or naturally a combative animal, and that his taste for organized combat was acquired—as far as our evidence goes—at a comparatively late stage of his sojourn on this planet. If he had been descended from one of the carnivora, the tiger or the wolf, the state of things summarized in the proverb, "man is a wolf to man" might have seemed only natural. But here we have the descendants of a probably harmless tree-dweller developing a ferocity beyond the capacity of the fiercest animal—though again we have quite peaceful and harmless breeds of men, even to-day, to show that it is no question of original, or at any rate, of universal sin.

The first question we should naturally ask is, What have men got to fight about? But the answer to this, though it would tell us much, would comprehend less than half of the truth, unless we were to include the things that men imagine they have got to fight about. Let us take the genial and widespread practice of head-hunting, that prevails, or has done so, in parts of Asia, Africa, the East Indies and the Pacific islands. The human head,

* *Janus*, p. 7.

severed from its body, and well dried or pickled for preservation, is about as unlovely and useless an object as it is possible to conceive of. And yet there are many communities whose members are ready to risk their own lives, and of course to sacrifice as many other lives as possible, for the purpose of obtaining these unsavoury trophies.

They have weighty reasons for so doing—logical enough if once the premises are granted. And yet these reasons, though perfectly definite in every instance, are quite different in different communities, even to the extent of cancelling one another out. The acquisition of the head may change its original owner from an enemy to a protecting spirit, and hence the head is treated with all possible honour. Or again it may be the fashion to believe that a collection of heads in this world means a corresponding collection of slaves in the next, and accordingly the poor head comes in for a good deal of rough usage, to teach the prospective slave his proper place. Or the reason for collecting heads may be totally different. But there is one truth that is common to all head-hunting, which is that, before you can get the head, the life of some poor man, woman or child has got to be extinguished, and their little time under the sun ended thus.

The head hunter generally imagines that he is getting some direct advantage to himself out of his proceedings. But the human imagination is capable of wilder feats of perversion than this rudimentary science. It is not enough for man to give rein to his lusts of hate and cruelty; he must invent beings of a malignancy and cruelty surpassing even his own, so that whatever fiendishness on Man's part may exceed the requirements of self-interest, becomes an act of piety to his gods. The Indian brave tortures his prisoner with a more conscientious thoroughness, because his war god happens to enjoy this form of entertainment. A certain pious Spaniard was in the habit of honouring the twelve apostles by punctually butchering, each day, a dozen of the inoffensive and civilized Peruvian people.

When Wordsworth wrote that Carnage was God's daughter, he may not have been telling the whole of the truth, but he was telling a good deal more of it than he realized. He might have added that the human imagination was a worthy grandfather to such a child. No amount of original sin has ever infected Man's

nature with half the devilry he is capable of fathering on his divinities. In primitive states of society, the line between god-worship and devil-worship would not always be easy to draw. That nightmare city of Benin, a veritable human slaughter-house, reeking with blood and festooned with skulls, could no doubt have claimed to be one of the most God- or Mumbo-Jumbo fearing spots in the whole of Africa, while the tyranny of the Mahdi in the Sudan, which is believed to have wiped out something like five-sixths of the population, was inspired by a fanatical cult of the one God, the Just, the Merciful.

Man's imagination is capable also of reinforcing his instincts of self-protection, by inventing dangers from his fellow-men more fearsome and difficult to guard against than the obvious and brutal forms of aggression. In many parts of the world, if a man dies, the fact is accounted for by the exercise of magic arts, and the supposed murderer has to be found out—perhaps smelt out by a witch doctor—and killed in his turn. This is naturally a prolific and never-ending cause of strife.

There seems to be no limit to the human capacity of finding excuses for propagating war on earth and ill will amongst men. But fiction is most effective when it is enlisted in support of instinct. And an instinct that is as old as life itself is the tendency to react against the unknown. Life is that which replies to environment, and the unknown in the environment is a potential source of danger to be dealt with either by evasion or attack. Those who study dogs will have abundant opportunities for observing the reactions of an intelligent animal towards the unusual. I have seen a young sheep dog, who flatly refused to pass a barrow, laden with faggots, on the road, but stood, furiously barking at it, and a large Airedale, a veritable Tom Cribb of his immediate neighbourhood, suddenly panicked at the bounding approach of two diminutive whippets, and ignominiously coursed by them over a common. A strange dog who wanders into a street will very likely be set upon by the local dogs, and birds are in the habit of behaving in a similar way towards any unaccountable stranger, such as an escaped parrot. We have already mentioned the monkeys of Brindaban, who live in wards, and are said to be jealously exclusive of strangers. All of which

prepares us for the corresponding human reaction, as exemplified in the most famous of all *Punch's* chestnuts:

"Oo's 'im, Bill?"
"A stranger."
"'Eave 'alf a brick at 'im."

Language itself is sufficient evidence of the way the stranger is regarded among many peoples. In an appendix to his *The Evolution of War*, Professor Davie has collected a number of instances of this from the most diverse sources, which show that the very word for "men" has frequently been appropriated by the tribe or community who happen to be the speakers, all the rest of the world being regarded, by implication, as an inferior species of animals. The Hottentots call themselves "men of men"; the Uchis claim semi-divine status as Children of the Sun; the Chinese have got themselves known as Celestials in opposition to "foreign devils." It would be difficult to number the peoples, nations and languages each of which is blessed with the certainty that it, and it alone, is in enjoyment of the unique and special favour of whatever gods may be. For why, the Lord (in the singular, plural or symbolic abstract) hath chosen Jacob (or Pharaoh, or any Brahman, or John Bull) for himself, and Israel (or Athens, or Benin or Islam or Holy Russia) for his own possession.

All of which would be simple and animal enough, were it not for the incalculable element introduced by the fiction-building powers of man's imagination. For the human attitude to strangers is not to be summed up in a simple generalization of love for all those within the pale and hatred for all outside it. Cutting across the simple and primitive hostility revealed in the identification, in many languages, of "stranger" with "enemy," and in the Arab proverb, "The stranger is for the wolf," are a variety of customs enjoining friendliness and hospitality—usually for a fixed time and under definite conditions—for the stranger within the gates. There are African hosts who go so far as to press upon the sometimes embarrassed guest the loan of a wife or daughter. To the Greek, as to the Bedouin, violation of guest-right was an act of the utmost impiety, and the Hebrew Jehovah is referred

to as the protector of strangers as well as of the fatherless and widow.

But of the two impulses to hate and to shelter a stranger, the first differs from the second, among most peoples, as a natural from a highly artificial product. Wagner was true to primitive Teutonic life, when, in the first act of *The Valkyries*, he made Hunding receive his blood-enemy, the unarmed Siegmund, who had taken refuge beneath his roof-tree, with scrupulous hospitality, but with the proviso that on the following day the feud should be pursued to the death. How deeply rooted is the prejudice against strangers may be seen by the extent to which it persists among even the most civilized peoples. It is a prejudice that lends itself to profitable exploitation by the newspaper press. In England and the United States colossal fortunes have been made by prostituting talents and resources to the mass production of ill-will. The whole power of the Fascist State is devoted to a gigantic effort of national self-suggestion that the Italian possesses all elements of superiority, within the compass of a language singularly rich in superlatives, over all foreigners.

The hatred, ridicule and contempt that are the portion of the stranger may, of course, be extended from people of another tribe or nation, to those of another caste or class. The Russian rank and file were never, during the last war, so ruthless to their enemies as they proved to their own officers when the breaking point came.

And it must be remembered—such are the curious perversities of human nature—that the enemy who is most hated is often not the complete stranger, but the member of a rival group which is near and only too well known. The very word rivals suggests the idea of men who live on the opposite banks of a stream. The deadliest blood feuds are between neighbouring families; the most bitter of all wars are civil wars; the most unrelenting of modern hatreds are between members of the same nation, but of different social grades.

It may be good enough for the brute creation to order its loves and hatreds by the evidence of its senses. The dog hates the cat that he sees and smells, not some unsubstantial tabby of the mind. But man loves, as he hates, the images that he himself has super-imposed upon reality. That simple old hero, Field

Marshal von Blücher, used to work himself up into a proper spirit of hatred by having a model of Napoleon constructed, on which he would fall furiously with his sabre. Had he been a shade more primitive he would have been fully persuaded that by this means he was actually compassing Napoleon's death, as Sister Helen wasted away her former lover by performing the like operation on his waxen image. As we get more civilized, our images cease to be material, and our hatreds become, in consequence, not less but more deadly.

The enormously developed art of caricature is simply one of substituting the image for the reality. There were few Englishmen—at any rate in England—who were not convinced during the World War of the existence of a typical German so unconceivably brutal as to be outside the scope of human mercy or fellow-feeling. Curiously enough, the Germans were just as firmly convinced of the existence of a typical and similar Englishman:

"He is known to you all! He is known to you all!
Full of envy and hate and gall."

Who could wonder at the enemy being thus misrepresented when people at home were capable of accepting the most absurd travesties of their own troops? Even when the blood-bath of the Somme was followed by the more ghastly mud-bath of the Flanders Ridges, people within earshot of the cannon were chuckling over the newspaper creation of the comic "Tommy."

The Fathers of the Holy Office knew their business, when they dressed up the victims, whom they intended to torture publicly to death, in grotesque costumes painted with devils. Any spectator whose pity might have been aroused at the spectacle of human agony, was probably convinced that such hateful zanies would be none the worse for a good burning. And it no doubt stiffened up the will of the home population to a knock-out victory, regardless of cost, when the comforting assurance was provided that the men in the trenches regarded the whole business of their being pushed into the shambles, by intellectually bankrupt commanders, in the light of excellent fun.

It is no doubt a truth of prime importance, from the sociologist's standpoint, that primitive man reacts to his own fictions

more readily than to the call of reality. But it is of even more importance to realize that civilized man has his own environment of fictions, and that the tendency to react to these instead of to reality is actually on the increase, owing to the ever-increasing powers of mass-suggestion to which he is subject.

The savage no doubt lives in a world of spooks and devils, of magic and taboo, all of which he takes for reality and to which he reacts accordingly. The average civilized man, with his standardized smattering of education, lives in a world of types and symbols no less divorced from reality. The task of those who cater for his entertainment, and the bulk of his information, is to simplify his mental processes by standing between him and his powers of observation, by providing him with a simple imaginary environment instead of a complicated real one.

No doubt the greater part of this type-making industry has no more sinister object than that of ministering to the mental economy, or laziness, of the multitudes who are ready to pay for such services. The crude type of popular drama or fiction, in which human nature is boiled down to heroism, villainy, sweetness, and comicality, such as nature never owned, is no more than a drug for jaded and not too well stocked minds. Its effects on the mind may not be directly tendentious, but merely like those of other drugs, a general weakening of the power of resistance and control. The patient—if we may apply this term to the victims of capitalized mass-suggestion—gradually loses his power of distinguishing between truth and fiction. He accepts his types in simple faith, and no more thinks of checking them by the evidence of his senses, than the savage of verifying the claims of his medicine men to control the weather.

But the evocation of types may also be the direct means of generating war. It is just because the primitive fear and hatred of the stranger are so near the surface, that it becomes a paying proposition to stimulate them by suggestion. Even where it is only a question of domestic politics, the average reader prefers advocacy to judgment. He likes to have his conscience relieved of any unseasonable promptings to fair play for the other side. For instance, those who wish to seize on the wealth of others who happen to possess it are greatly relieved by having set before them the figure of a dropsical deformity in a frock coat, with a

ridiculously small top hat, and labelled "Capitalist." Though he has never seen anything remotely like this figure, the proletarian is quite willing to believe that everybody liable to supertax is of this kidney, and that to relieve him of his wealth is an act of positive righteousness. And the possessing class returns the compliment by depicting the loose-lipped and unshaven agitator, bawling from his tub, as the typical socialist.

If such travesties can pass muster within the limits of the community, much more easy is it to subject the foreigner, whose language is strange and whose customs only known at second-hand, to this sort of treatment. It is the merest jurnalese child's play to focus intensive hatred upon any people that happens to be cast for the part of national enemy. It is so easy to vizualize that people as one person, with unpleasing features and loathsome characteristics. During the war with Japan, some Russian peasants were said to be fully persuaded that the Japanese were in the habit of creeping into the soldiers' boots and sucking their blood. Something slightly less crude is required for a public able to read. The Germans might be allowed to convert corpses into munitions, but not to eat them round their bivouac fires. Even the Kaiser was not commonly credited with a tail to match his Mephistophelean moustachios and nature. But, save for these trifling limitations, it is the exact reverse of the truth to maintain, with Burke, that it is hard to bring an indictment against a whole nation. Modern experience proves it to be the easiest thing in the world.

Strife can be generated by fictions more subtle. An imaginary world can be created in which the nations are personified and treated as if they were human beings. They are glibly spoken of as "wanting" this, or "having" that; they have an "honour" that would be violated were the slightest curb to be put on their egotism. And the humblest citizen is so far capable of identifying himself with these phantoms that he will, if an Englishman, persuade himself that he "has" India, or, if an Italian, that he "wants" Tunis.

The savage may part heads from their bodies for the benefit of Mumbo Jumbo, or pour out blood like water in order to vivify a grinning skeleton; Christian knights may ride fetlock deep in blood through the streets of Zion in order to prostrate

themselves at the alleged tomb of Him who commanded them to resist not evil; civilized man is capable of making even vaster holocausts to the figments of his imagination. Perhaps the most ghastly of all consequences of this mental kink is the almost universal belief, among modern democracies, that once a war has been started, it constitutes the height of disloyalty to those imaginary beings, who personify nations, to stop short of any solution but an absolute triumph of force, a "knock out," enabling the victor to subject the vanquished absolutely and ruthlessly to his will.

This, of course, is no new thing, though in old days the gods played the part that national abstractions do now. Most schoolboys will remember the terrible trouble in which poor King Saul was involved, when he neglected to murder one of his prisoners, the king of a tribe with which "Israel" had a centuries' old vendetta.

"Behold," the bloodthirsty "man of God" is reported to have informed him, with immortal sententiousness, "to obey is better than sacrifice."

So when, in 1916, after two years of intensive homicide, without any visible prospect of decision, the American President proposed to the belligerent nations a "peace without victory"—a peace, that is to say, of reason and not of force—he was greeted with a howl of execration worthy of Samuel himself. To sacrifice millions of lives, and everything that makes civilized life worth living, was better than to forgo the chance of believing that the fat man in eighteenth century costume, or the helmeted Amazon with a trident, who did duty for England, had, in conjunction with a rather mixed crew of associates, got another person called Germany starved and bludgeoned into allowing patriotic hands to be run through his, or her, pockets. In the same way war-hardened generals were ready to gamble against what must ultimately have proved overwhelming odds of numbers and resources, rather than deny the thing they called Germany the satisfaction of a "good" and proportionately outrageous peace. It is difficult to see how, in such transactions, civilized man can claim to have any advantage over the fetish-worshipper or the head-hunter.

But it is impossible to study the fictions either of civilized or

savage man, without realizing that there is often a good deal of method in their apparent unreason. Man is a strange self-deceiver. He makes his gods, not only in his own image, but to a large extent for his own purposes. However anthropomorphic or devilish they may be, they are what binds the tribe or community together. They serve as the most potent conceivable means of auto-suggestion, by providing the faith that, in the expressive Oriental imagery, can move mountains.

It is this very faith that may turn fiction into reality. A taboo is often exactly what it professes to be, to the extent, at any rate, of killing by sheer fright any one who has been unlucky enough to violate it. The witch doctor may effect veritable cures on those who believe implicitly enough in his powers. And the gods may be veritable Lords of Hosts, going forth before the armies of their faithful, and giving them the victory.

When we find men fighting and dying for an idea, it is worth our while to ask what is really at the back, or in the depths, of their minds. Not that the answer will always be simple. Such practices as head-hunting or collecting victims for human sacrifice, we can indeed class as murderous superstitions, whose prevalence has as few compensating advantages as that of the yellow fever germ. But numbers of taboos—those, for instance, against in-breeding, or eating unclean meats, or association of a married daughter with her mother—may strike us as expressive of the profoundest eugenic or social wisdom. It may be a practice not wholly without its advantages, that the divine right of kings should carry with it the privilege of being knocked on the head with a club as soon as His Majesty is past work. Those who read books like Sir J. Frazer's *Golden Bough* may be inclined to regard the savage mind as a mere breeding ground of fallacies and cock-and-bull stories, but when one comes to see how these absurdities work out in practice, one will often be astonished at their practical efficacy.

The worst of this kind of thinking is that it follows too closely the lines of nature herself—

"of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,"

and of fifty fictions, born of the primitive mind, perhaps forty-nine will be mischievous or unproductive. After all, the vast majority of human communities have been content to stagnate, or back-slide along the grooves of immemorial custom. They learn nothing because they forget nothing. They have too much blind faith to profit by experience. The wars of such peoples are like all their other activities, a monotonous and morbid routine, like the filling and bursting of a chronic abscess.

With the coming of Man, natural selection is raised from the physical to the mental plane. It is those few peoples who have been relatively masters of their imaginations, who have come to the front in the race of life. This is only another way of saying that where there is no vision, the people perish. Many sceptical and cultured Romans of the Empire, though they had little enough faith in the reality of the Olympians, considered it all-important to preserve intact that basis of ancestral fiction on which the greatness of Rome had been built and on which they believed it to repose.

This art of mastering the imagination may include that of enlisting pious fiction in the service of practical self-interest. It is an art of which foreigners, rightly or wrongly, credit John Bull with being a past master, though the holy zeal of the Catholic Spaniards exploiting the inhabitants and silver mines of Peru, of the French revolutionists "liberating" other peoples by military conquest, and of the pious Hohenzollern," hardly exaggerated in the skit:

"Ten thousand Frenchmen sent below,
Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"

are not inferior, in their kind, to anything English. Collective egotism is never so formidable as when whatever gods there be are enlisted in its service.

"Through God shall we do great acts, it is even through him that we shall tread down our enemies," is a text capable of being adapted to divers uses, and the totem emblems on the standards of the first Pharaohs tell the same story as the *Gott mit uns* on the helmet of the Pomeranian grenadier.

Pious Man has a way of contriving that his deities shall be good gods of business. There is no reason that those who wage

war in a religious spirit should not also wage it with a keen eye to the main chance. For this reason, it is not always safe to trust to the accounts furnished by contemporaries—even where their good faith is beyond suspicion—of the motives of wars. The archeologist's spade leaves us little doubt that the siege of Troy was a historical event. What we know of the sacred bond between host and guest only confirms the probability that the crime of Paris, in running away with his host's wife, would have sent a thrill of holy horror throughout Greece. But can we seriously believe that outraged piety, any more than Helen's face, would have been sufficient by itself to have launched a thousand ships? Is it not just possible that business motives may have entered into the Greek calculations, and that there was a sense in which Agamemnon, King of Men, may be regarded as the head-director of a highly important, if speculative, business venture? We know now that Virgil spoke the truth when he said, "Troy *was*." Troy, as a matter of fact, *was*, nine times. Yes, but *why* was Troy? A glance at the map will tell. It stood at the entrance to the Dardanelles, on one of the trade routes of the ancient world. The story of the Argo and the Golden Fleece in all probability records one of the first attempts to open up the Black Sea hinterland to Greek trade. The position of Troy doubtless enabled her to control and exploit this trade. The desire of the Greeks to take Troy and get a free passage into the Black Sea must have been of the same nature as that of the Russians to take Constantinople and to get out of the Black Sea. But no doubt Agamemnon, Achilles, and their peers, sincerely believed that Helen was the cause of, and not merely the excuse for, their activities.

Again, why is it that the first hosts of Islam made such an easy conquest of the African and part of the Asiatic provinces of the Byzantine Empire? Pure religious or fanatical enthusiasm, carrying all before it, is what we are tempted to answer. And this answer no doubt contains a part—an important part—of the truth. But it is no less important to realize that the imperial fiscal system had so effectively bled the provinces in question, that they were inclined to regard a change of faith and masters with anything but disfavour. The fruit hardly needed

to be plucked. It was ripe to drop into the brown hands outstretched to grasp it.

We are right in regarding Man as a spiritual being. He lives in a world of his own imaginative creations. He fights and dies for his ideas. But the relations between imaginative fiction and material fact are both various and intricate, and it is only by the most penetrating study of each particular case that we can determine whether, and to what extent, we are to regard the fiction as a camouflage for a realistic but unavowed pursuit of material interests.

If then we are to ask the question, what it is that makes a being, so naturally peaceable as primitive man seems to have been, take to the slaughter of his species as "the lordliest life on earth," our first answer will be that he is the Don Quixote of the universe, riding atilt at the phantoms of his imagination. Most wars, and probably all primitive wars, are therefore holy wars. But if we look into the matter a little more closely, we may find that the chivalrous Don is often less fitted than Holy Willy to typify a community in arms. A people wants something quite material and tangible, and then, with sincere piety, makes up a story to justify the taking of it.

Most of us, in the schoolroom, have glowed with pious enthusiasm on reading the account of how those ferocious children of the desert, who traced their descent from Abraham, accepted a mandate from Jehovah to exterminate the whole population of a land—reputed to be flowing with milk and honey—that they happened to covet. None of us ever dreamed of questioning the ethics of the resultant butchery, and the proceedings of Joshua and his horde were accepted as guides for daily conduct. One little book of texts heads its selection for the last day of the year with one from the Book of Joshua, "There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed," which would seem peculiarly adapted to the needs of land-grabbers of all ages. And certain German pastors are reported to have justified, with irresistible logic, the conduct of their countrymen in "hacking through" neutral Belgium, by the even more drastic action taken by Moses in respect of a certain King Sehon, who, like King Albert, demurred to his territory being used for the passage of an army marching to exterminate his neighbours. Certain black tribes of West Africa

justify their plundering raids on their neighbours on the ground that God is known to have created oxen for their exclusive benefit, and that they are therefore only taking back their own.*

Sometimes, and especially among the realistic Nordic folk, the pretence of religion is dropped, and the view openly proclaimed that might is right, as in the Middleton family motto:

"My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
These make me lord of all below,
And he who fears my lance to wield
Beneath my shaggy shield must bow,
His lands, his vineyards, must resign,
For all that cowards have is mine."

But this is a comparatively late and sophisticated view, and in the vast majority of instances, the right claimed to murder other people and appropriate their property is a divine right.

To enumerate the practical advantages that men expect to get from making war on one another, would be like writing an amplification of the Tenth Commandment. You may covet your neighbour's house or, more probably, your neighbour's land; you may covet your neighbour's wife, and the rest of his women-folk; you may covet your neighbour's ox and herds, as the Bedouins coveted Job's; you may covet your neighbour's person, as a slave or a meal. You may covet your neighbour's wealth, either below ground in mines, or more easily accessible, in the form of plunder or tribute, and in the fullness of time, you may get to coveting your neighbour's trade, with its appurtenances of markets, raw materials, coaling stations and trade secrets.

It will be obvious that the more civilization develops, the more food there will be for covetousness, and—failing some countervailing spiritual impulse—the more likelihood of war. The scattered families of primitive hunters, wandering about after their game and sleeping in caves, can have had little incentive to do more than keep out of one another's way. Herdsmen, wandering in search of pasturage, must frequently have come into collision, and may not always have compromised the matter in so gentlemanly a way as Abraham and Lot. But it is when men

* Letourneau, *La Guerre*, p. 68.

settle down to till the soil and lead a civilized life in cities, that the temptation to strife grows acute.

Every settled community is a store of wealth to any one able to seize it, and what patient labour has accumulated may be appropriated by "my sword, my spear, my shaggy shield." Where some swamp or wilderness has been changed into a smiling and a fertile land, there are generally poor but hardy tribes in the offing, with ears to hear the divine call to go up against that land and possess it.

Such action, or the fear of it, produces, sooner or later, an equivalent reaction even in what may once have been peaceably inclined communities. This happened in Egypt after her invasion and conquest by the Shepherd Kings. It is what may conceivably happen in modern China, as it has already happened in Japan. War is a disease that grows by what it feeds upon. The settled community finds itself in a warlike environment. It must reply to that environment, it must organize to repel force by force; and it perhaps makes the discovery that the best mode of defence is a vigorous offensive. In time the offensive habit may become chronic, and the once peaceful folk go forth in the name of its gods, conquering and to conquer.

CHAPTER VII

HOW WAR INFECTED CIVILIZATION

WHEN we talk about the development of war, we ought not to forget that the enormous majority of wars can hardly be said to be part of a developing activity at all, but are, except for the destruction they cause, entirely barren of results. It is only among a few exceptionally highly developed peoples, that enough concentration, intelligence, and capital, are put into the business of fighting, to make it an art, rather than a customary outburst of collective animal spirits, more like the activities of herd and pack than those of a civilized nation in arms.

Some animals—not to speak of insects like bees and ants—can lay claim to quite soldierly instincts. Prince William of Sweden speaks of the instinctive discipline and team-spirit of the hunting dogs of Africa, which, though cowardly enough in small parties, are the terror of every other animal, and of Man himself, when united in large packs. The African buffalo, about the fiercest and most dangerous of the whole brute creation, goes about in herds that, as soon as they get wind of a stranger, line up and charge, carrying certain death to any human being in their path not active enough to climb a tree, or able, by a lucky shot, to split the herd into two sections.

It would be interesting to compare such herd activities with those of entirely unorganized human mobs. Any one who has had experience of an English undergraduate “rag,” must have observed a faculty of instinctive combination for a common purpose—usually that of illicit combustion—very similar in its nature to that of the herd or pack. Mr. Belloc has somewhere remarked on the tactical instinct displayed by French mobs, which have been known to deploy in soldierly fashion.

The warfare of primitive peoples is seldom of the sort that produces any sort of decision, except the occasional more or less complete extermination of some village or tribe. There is seldom

enough of military organization to effect a conquest, or of governmental organization to make it permanent. The army is commonly the whole community in its combative aspect, not always excluding the women, who play a minor rôle in taunting or encouraging the warriors, and finishing off the wounded.

It does not follow that because war is the be-all and end-all of a people's existence, they are therefore militarized in the sense that the word may be used of civilized peoples. There have been no more bellicose folk than the Indians of the North American prairies, with whom hunting and war were once the only forms of honourable masculine activity. From earliest infancy, the young Indian's training was directed to making him an efficient warrior. His pride was to endure the utmost extremity of pain without a murmur. Even the squaws made it a point of honour not to cry out or wince in childbed—brave mothers would bear brave papooses.

But for the Indian, war, despite the craft and courage he brought to its pursuit, was but a phase of his immemorial activity of hunting. He brought the same methods to the discomfiture of those who intruded on his hunting grounds as he did to the hunting itself. The mounted braves would hunt for scalps as if they were hunting bison, never receiving a charge, but breaking and circling round the opposing flanks, trusting to surprise and ambush in preference to direct attack. Such fighting was their supreme form of sport or athleticism, and even the last, grim ordeal at the stake was regarded in this light. The captured brave welcomed torture as his supreme opportunity for triumphing over pain—it was, in fact, a contest between him and his executioners, and he would make it a point of honour to provoke them to display their utmost skill on his body. Indeed, in some tribes, the captive, previously to being operated upon, would be treated with as much friendliness as one of a visiting team might be, by good sportsmen, before a cricket match. Even a consort might be provided for him, until the stake was ready.

Indian war never succeeded in being any more than such a glorified athleticism. It is wonderful that the Red Man gave as much trouble as he did, before the whites had driven him off his prairies and confined him to reservations. He was never capable of calling a halt to this advance; he could only harass and take

toll of it. He could not keep an army together or pursue a strategic aim—his victories ended with the scalp dance and the stake; they produced no enduring results. His last great success, as late as 1876, at the Little Big Horn, did no more than provide him with an honourable exit. Here a great gathering of Sioux tribes, under a chief called Sitting Bull, succeed in wiping out, to the last man, a force of several hundred horsemen, led by one of the most brilliant cavalry commanders of the Civil War, who had the rashness to charge into a horde of yelling braves. But even this triumph could not be followed up. There was no other battle. Sitting Bull's host gradually broke up and melted away, and the forces that were hurried to the North-West to avenge General Custer's fate soon found themselves without an enemy.

Among the bloodthirsty tribes of West Africa, war took a less disinterested form than among Redskins. They were raiders, and there was no pretence of a quarrel or declaration of war. Some distant village would be selected as affording the best chance for profitable robbery, the "King" would assemble every one in his own village capable of bearing arms, each man acting as his own commissariat and his own paymaster, and off they would start, a few score strapping negroes, with the utmost speed and secrecy. If all went well, the victims would be surprised in their sleep, their few possessions secured, those of them who were not massacred forthwith kept for the cooking pot or the sacrifice, or, in a slightly more advanced state of civilization, for the slave market. Here we have a line of conduct not essentially different from that of a pack of hunting dogs, except that these human carnivora have no equivalent to the proverb, "Dog will not eat dog," but prey remorselessly upon their own species.

Or again, as among certain Pacific islanders, war between neighbouring villages may be part of an immemorial custom, just as year after year the same match may be played between two cricket or baseball teams. Custom may even set apart some particular place of meeting for these chronic, if not always sanguinary contests.

These are fairly typical examples of war as it is waged among primitive peoples. Speaking generally, it would be hardly an exaggeration to say that it settles nothing and leads nowhere. But for the coming of the white man, bands of Redskins might

still be hunting the bison and skirmishing with each other on the prairie, swart dynasts might be perpetrating a healthy state of terror and anthropophagy "on the banks of Timbuctoo," and the simple inhabitants of the Solomon Islands gratifying their taste for clubbing and spearing one another as often as the fancy, or custom, took them.

It would no doubt be possible to cite instances even of such primitive warfare, that have not been entirely barren of results. Occasionally conquerors have arisen who have succeeded in enslaving or holding to tribute whole communities of their neighbours. A state of things may be reproduced to which we have analogies in the plant world and among ants. Tribes of fierce nomads have succeeded in quartering themselves on peaceful tillers of the soil, whom they have compelled to do the work that they themselves despise. Thus a partnership is created that may not be wholly to the disadvantage of the enslaved, but protected, partner.

These are exceptions, of no permanent importance, to the normal futility of warfare among primitive or savage peoples. War is a custom, and the tyranny of custom is too strong to give scope for innovation. Indeed, it is only in a comparatively late stage of civilization that a commander is allowed to devote his energies to the sole purpose of beating the enemy. Even among the Athenians, there were commanders who were more concerned with observing the correct ritual than with averting disaster. That old-fashioned gentleman, Nicias, who shared the command of the expeditionary force before Syracuse, engineered the utter ruin of the Athenian cause by a too scrupulous piety. When the army had lost the last hope of taking the city, and there was still time to have got away by a rapid march to a friendly city, there came an eclipse of the moon, and the infatuated Nicias thereupon dawdled away the correct thrice nine vital days, while the enemy was making his dispositions. When the army did start, it was too late.

At Culloden, when Prince Charlie and his clans had failed in a night march to surprise the Duke of Cumberland, his army had to face about, so that the Clan Macdonald, which had been on the right of the line, was now on the left. But this involved a breach of clan precedence, and unless the Macdonalds, who had

hunted the redcoats like hares at Falkirk, could fight on the right, they were not going to fight at all. Accordingly, when the other clans broke and were broken on the English lines, the Macdonalds remained sullen spectators, and when all was lost, commenced to withdraw in good order. In vain did their aged chieftain, Macdonald of Keith, implore them to advance. "Good God!" he cried, "have the children of my tribe forsaken me!" But even when he fell, shot before their eyes, his clansmen remained passive.

Among the more primitive, but even more warlike Maoris, so little was warfare dominated by the will to win, that when the English soldiers were reported to be short of ammunition, fresh supplies were offered by the enemy, a good fight being evidently more esteemed than a good victory.

Under such conditions it is to the last degree unlikely that military genius will find scope, or that any high degree of military organization will be evolved. Even where we do find anything of the kind, we shall be inclined to suspect the influence of a more advanced civilization. Thus the two great Zulu Kings, Dingiswayo and Chaka, who organized their nation into one rigidly disciplined standing army, were undoubtedly under the influence of European models, though the fact that they did not, like the Japanese, reinforce European discipline with European weapons, condemned them to defeat, first at the hands of the Boer Trekkers, and subsequently of the invading English.

How was it, we may ask, that organized war, as distinct from the mere habitual combativeness of the human herd, ever got started? One thing will be fairly obvious; whether or not war is necessary to the development of civilization, a certain amount of civilization is required for the development of war. To achieve permanent results, armies must be organized and disciplined. A mere horde, following its collective instinct, and hide-bound by custom, may be destructive, in the sense that a herd of charging buffaloes is destructive, but of constructive conquest it is incapable.

For the beginnings of organized war we must, then, look to the beginnings of organized civilization. Modern research has vastly increased our knowledge, without giving us any greater certainty as to where the cradle of Western civilization is to be

located. There are impassioned and uncompromising partisans for the claims of priority of each of the two river valley civilizations, that of the Nile and that of the Tigris-Euphrates. It is without prejudice to the claims of either party that we shall direct our eyes first to the ancient and homogeneous civilization of Egypt.

We know now that the thin strip of land, bordering on and fertilized by the Nile, was the abode of civilized folk long before the use of metals and the crowning of the first Pharaoh. It was during this pre-dynastic and pre-historic time that some forgotten genius discovered the art of harnessing the river itself to human service by means of irrigation. The annual flooding of the valley, due to the melting of the Abyssinian snows, was thus controlled and made fruitful for civilization.

But a system of irrigation demands unified control. Even to-day, in India, it is seen how selfish villagers can throw everything out of gear by the simple expedient of tampering with the common supply, for the benefit of their own fields. If Egypt was to prosper, she must become one kingdom, and one kingdom she accordingly became. It is from this point that recorded Egyptian history starts.

There was civilization in Egypt long before there was unity. Names have even come down to us of pre-dynastic Kings of the Nile Delta. But we can only guess at the process by which the family or village communities came to be united into two kingdoms of the North, or the Delta, and of the South, or navigable Nile. We may attach such importance as it merits to a hint of Diodorus, in the first century A.D., who records that the Egyptian villages of his time were still given to contemning and fighting each other in the name of their sacred beasts,* probably the survivors of pre-historic totems.

What is probably the first decisive campaign of history is that which resulted in the conquest of the North by the first Pharaoh of the First Dynasty, who fixed his capital at the strategic point of Memphis, near the modern Cairo, at the head of the Delta. This potentate is gradually emerging out of the mists of legend as a historical figure, bearing the name of Menes.

What sort of a war was it that established Egypt for so many

* Quoted A. B. Cowan. *War in World History*, p. 27.

centuries in the van of civilization? There is a modern school of writers who would have us believe that during the first dozen centuries or so of the united kingdom, war was a thing so foreign to the Egyptian nature as to have been almost unknown. And certainly the Egyptians, to this day, have remained a conspicuously unwarlike people. It is in living memory how, at the first wild rush of the Mahdi's dervishes, the armed fellahs of Hicks Pasha's army flung themselves down amid the scrub to be hacked to pieces, too frightened even to run away. But that Menes and those shadowy monarchs of the first dynasty, "The Scorpion," "The Serpent," Aha, and the rest, were mild or peaceable individuals, is quite contrary to such little evidence as has filtered down to us. We know enough to convince us that, like Alexander the Macedonian and William the Norman, they thought of themselves as conquerors, and that their methods of getting and holding their conquests were none too gentle.

We have no official bulletins of the first Pharaoh's Delta Campaigns, but we have an account, inscribed on the walls of a temple built by one of the Ptolemies, some three thousand years later, of what was evidently handed down to posterity as the true account of the matter. We must remember that the primitive mind—and most of all the primitive Egyptian mind—inhabits a world peopled by its own imaginative creations, and that the workaday facts of life have got to fit themselves into this scheme. It is not the man Menes who is contending with some rival chief for a triangle of fertile land; the contest is between the powers of light and darkness, between the wicked Set, and the hawk god Horus, armed with the sun disk of Ra.

The account of this war, fantastic when taken literally, reads none the less like a symbolic and highly coloured version of things that really happened. The battles are definite enough, and casualty lists of 625 killed and 142 prisoners astonish us by their moderation. But there can be no doubt of the spirit in which that war was waged. Horus, we are told, loved a day of fighting more than a day of rejoicing,* and his triumphal hymn contains an exhortation to his followers to eat the flesh of the enemy and drink his blood, to cut him to pieces, to let his bones be given

* *Ancient Egyptian Legends* by M. A. Murray, p. 59.

lamentation. The first divine kings were warriors, and if they were not fierce and cruel, their own palettes, mace-heads and other relics are monstrous self-libels. The gods themselves set the example of pugnacity, and enjoined it on their human followers. The Egyptian sovereign was never—by his own account—fighting for his own hand, but to quell impious revolt against his gods, “the word for impiety,” says Dr. Mercer, “being the same as for enemy. In short, all war was moral, ideal, supernatural, and sanctioned by divine precedent.”

Having allowed for this old Adam of bellicosity, we can talk, with a clear conscience, of the great peaceful civilization of the Nile Valley. For once Osiris—whatever individual or spirit may be masked by that name—had effected the final reconciliation of North and South, the realm of the Pharaohs settled down to a long period of prosperity, seldom troubled by war.

If ever the conditions were set for an earthly paradise, it was in the Egypt of this age. The climate, except for occasional winter rains in the North, was one of perpetual, but not intolerable sunshine. Punctually every year the Nile brought down its free gift of increase. The land was as nearly safe from outside interference as it was possible for a land to be. We can imagine an Egyptian Shakespeare writing of

“This silver thread worked in the golden sand,”

for the desert that stretched on either side of the Nile Valley, and haunted only by a few wandering Bedouins, afforded an even surer protection than the sea to England, while the Mediterranean had not yet begun to bear fighting navies on her bosom. What had the Egyptians got to fight about? They had to keep their strip of civilization safe from desert raiders and the barbarian tribes far away up the Nile, in tropical Africa—but this was hardly more serious work than our Indian army has to do on the North West Frontier. As the needs of their civilization increased, there were mines to be maintained beyond the frontier in the Sinai Peninsula, and various articles of present and posthumous luxury to be traded for in such distant lands as the mysterious Punt—probably Somaliland—in times when trade had to go armed, and the distinction between trader and raider was not always too clearly drawn.

War was not a thing that interested the people of ancient Egypt, or played any considerable part in their lives. Of these lives we know more than a little, for it was an Egyptian gentleman's custom to adorn the inner chambers of his tomb with the scenes he loved and with which he was familiar in life. A happy life it seems to have been, on the whole, not only for the urbane aristocracy, whose mansions, with their pools and gardens, must have been among the most delightful ever inhabited by man, but for the busy craftsmen and labourers, who also had their unchanging place and task in the social system,* and echoes of whose song and chaff, squabbles and grousing, are still thrown back to us from the walls of those second, long-tenanted mansions. It was a life, above all, with the same background of eternity for prince and peasant, the same world of imaginative fiction, whose existence nobody dreamed of doubting, and of which all were kept continually in mind by an unintermittent ritual.

Despite the fact that Egyptian civilization took more apparent thought for the dead than the living, it is no paradox to say that its supreme goal was life—life in the highest and fullest sense of which it could conceive. It was something that men should live in a prosperity unknown beyond the limits of the Nile Basin; it was more than some of them, at least, should contrive to live well; it was most of all that one, even if it were at first but the divine Pharaoh, should achieve life immortal. For it is after immortality, not necessarily for themselves, that all creatures have aspired since the first stirrings of life. Those who have gazed upon the silent strength of the pyramids, clear-cut against a sky waning from blue to purple, and have seen in them merely the monuments of predeceased tyranny, might learn a lesson from the rose, who clothes herself with scent and colour, not for her own sake, but that life, and roses, may not perish from the earth. What means of compulsion had the Pharaohs of the Fourth Dynasty? Cheops, or Khufu, the builder of the greatest pyramid, weighing some five and three quarter millions of tons, was no

* There is no peace, according to Ptah Hotep, in a town where servants are miserable, though he rather ruefully admits that when servants get favours they are apt to leave. This does not point to a state of social tyranny.

warrior—it is most unlikely that he even had an army to overawe his city of a hundred thousand workers. It is easier, and more sane, to believe that this Wonder of the World, whose wonder increases when we mark the cunning perfection of its workmanship, arose, like Chartres Cathedral, as the sublime realization of a people's dream, and that joy went to its making.

It was, in the highest sense, human, that immortality should have been sought for in the person of one divine being. In Cairo museum, we have the Pharaoh, commemorated by the second of the great pyramids, before our eyes—our mind's eyes—for his statue is no ordinary portrait, but an ideal, fixed in diorite, of the Hero as King. It is the spirit of the pyramids in human form, strength made perfect in peace. We may ask what triumphs, what conquests, are recorded of this monarch during a reign that is believed to have lasted beyond its jubilee. Let Professor Breasted answer: "Beyond these buildings we know nothing of Khafre's deeds." * This silence is an even more impressive tribute than the pyramid and the statue to the Hero King, under whom, we may well believe, Egypt was godly and quietly governed, and the land had peace.

To the foot of these pyramids came, in the fullness of time, a hero who was destined to make a great deal of noise in the world, and was just on the point of achieving one of his many masterpieces of slaughter:

"*Soldiers*," he cried, "remember that forty centuries have their eyes fixed on you."

Had he been able to pierce the significance of that timeless scrutiny, the arm raised in theatrical gesture might have fallen limp; there would have been no journey to Moscow and no voyage to Saint Helena, and we should be living in a world nobler and happier, in proportion as the calm of Khafre excels the unrest of Napoleon Buonaparte.

It is during the Fourth Dynasty that Egyptian civilization attains its zenith. Apart from the supreme achievement of the pyramids, it is the culminating age of Egyptian art. The blight of formal repetition has not yet descended upon it. Such works as the Khafre effigies, the seated scribe, the wonderful portrait statues of Rahotep and Princess Nofret—that intensely modern

* *A History of Egypt*, p. 120.

young woman whose lips seem perpetually on the point of parting in some earnest indiscretion—are works of splendid individuality. In their peculiar quality of calm strength, an embodied power of command that is based upon self-command, it is doubtful whether the best of them have ever been equalled. Beside the seated Khafre even Michelangelo's prophets seem lacking in force, and the Parthenon sculptures in impressiveness. It is doubly remarkable that strength should be the distinctive note of a civilization that flourished in a time of profound peace, and can have derived no inspiration whatever from war or militarism.

Such warlike effort as there was, under the Old Kingdom, seems to have been devoted entirely to the maintenance of the *status quo*, though this may sometimes have involved counter-attack and punishment of intrusive raiders. War was not an affair of specialists, but an improvisation, a reaction of the social body to pressure from without. Under the first Pepi, a strong Pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty, Egypt was quite busily occupied in clearing her frontiers, and we have fortunately the biography of one Uni, a faithful minister who was entrusted with several warlike expeditions, and whose naïve account of these is cited by Professor Breasted * as revealing the totally unwarlike character of the Early Egyptians. Uni's method of raising an army was to supplement militia levies by black auxiliaries from Nubia, up the Nile, which had lately felt the weight of King Pepi's arm. What appears to give Uni most satisfaction of all is not so much his defeat of the enemy's forces, as his success in transporting the granite for Pharaoh's pyramid from the Upper Nile, with the escort of only one warship.

After a period of anarchy and disintegration that ushers in another period of Pharaonic splendour, known as the Middle Kingdom, we do indeed hear of the nucleus of a professional army, consisting of trained companies of picked troops, while the lords of the nomes, or provinces, have their own troops of trained retainers. But for centuries Egyptian policy remained fundamentally unchanged and unmilitary. It needed the stimulus of a great disaster to turn the peaceful kingdom into a military empire.

This disaster fell upon Egypt when the nomads beyond the

* Op. cit., p. 135.

pale of her civilization were at last able to cross her protecting desert, and undertake not a raid, but a conquest. For this two conditions were necessary, anarchy at home, and some new military invention that should give the invaders a decisive advantage. And indeed, from the confused records of the time, the one certain piece of information we glean is that the central power had lost its grip—the nomes were out of hand, and the whole complex system on which the prosperity of the country depended was thrown out of gear by the friction of internal strife. But perhaps even this would not have been enough, had not the invaders employed an arm of which the Egyptians had so far never dreamed—cavalry or horsed chariots. The horse, an anachronism in modern war, was then a terrifying novelty:

He goeth out to meet the armed men;
He mocketh at fear and is not dismayed;
Neither turneth he back from the sword,
The quiver rattleth against him,
The flashing spear and the javelin.
He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage,
Neither standeth he still at the voice of the trumpet.
'As oft as the trumpet soundeth he saith, Aha!
And he smelleth the battle afar off,
The thunder of the captains and the shouting.

The Delta and the navigable part of the Nile were overrun; the usual accompaniments of successful invasion, slaughter and destruction, were not lacking; a dynasty of Shepherd Kings reigned on the throne of Egypt, while the native Pharaohs were driven up river to Thebes, and even further South. It was only after some two centuries that the tide turned. The native dynasty had learned its lesson—in a hard school, as we know from a mummy of one of its members, horribly mutilated in his last fight—and the Egyptians were at last as consummate artists of war as their enemies. The Shepherd Kings and their followers were pushed down the Nile, hunted from their last refuge in the Delta, and not even allowed to rally in Palestine, for they were followed up and smitten there.

The Nile had again passed under Egyptian rule, but the old, peaceful Kingdom was gone beyond recall. Egypt was now an

imperial power; a standing and professional army carried the standards of Pharaoh as far as the Taurus and the Euphrates. But the thunder of the captains and the shouting were less impressive than the silence of the pyramids and the calm of the throned Khafre.

The pioneers of civilization in the other great river valley, that of the Tigris-Euphrates, were in a less happy position than the Egyptians. Nature did not play into their hands in the same way—she brought rich gifts of fertility, but she did not yield them without a struggle, a struggle in which Man, triumphant for a while, failed to hold what he had won. To the English "Tommies" in Mesopotamia it was a standing and bitter joke that this place of burning sands was the Garden of Eden. And yet the wilderness between the rivers did once blossom like the rose. How astounding a triumph this must have been in the war of Man against nature, will be realized when we reflect that with all the resources of modern civilization, and given the most favourable human conditions, it will probably be a matter of centuries before the old fertility is restored. So decisively has the war of Man against Man crippled Man's forces in his war against Nature.

The tiller of Mesopotamian soil has two natural disadvantages in comparison with his Egyptian fellow. He has a summer temperature that is one of the fiercest in the world, and the mud of his two rivers does not come down like that of the Nile, nicely filtered by cataracts up stream. With the fertile mud is mixed the coarser silt that blocks up canals, leaves ports land-locked, and causes floods as disastrous as that of which the legend has come down to us in our own Bible, which, if we may accept the Biblical figures, though it attained the modest depth of some four fathoms, was enough to swamp the whole Delta, with its city-crowned mud-hills. But with these natural obstacles human ingenuity showed itself quite fitted to cope. What ultimately turned the scales against Man was the fact that Mesopotamia never enjoyed the long isolation of Egypt from human aggression. The Basin of the two rivers, from where they emerge from the Northern mountains, proved far less easy than the Nile to unite into one unit of government. Even the great power of Assyria broke in the attempt. And the Basin itself was an am-

phitheatre in which the spectacle of settled civilization was continually being watched by eyes at once greedy and scornful. To the West rose the Arabian plateau, tenanted by fierce tribes of Semitic herdsmen, whose gods would ever and anon command them to swarm down into a land of corn and wine, of milk and honey, and possess it. To the East and North lay mountain ranges, peopled by hardy and frugal tribes, who, if they knew none of the other arts of civilization, might specialize in that of war. And out of the unknown hinterland might appear fresh swarms of fighting barbarians, a human flood, sweeping over the plain and its cities with the irresistible force of many waters.

We have learnt, in recent years, the substantial truth of the old legend that tells how civilization was first brought to the Delta by a race of fish-men from the sea, led by one Oannes. This is that wonderful and now extinct race of the Sumerians, with whose rather squat forms and bird-like features we are becoming ever more familiar as the archaeologist's spade uncovers fresh evidences of that first experiment in generating, within the forcing house of an independent city, a life at once prosperous and beautiful.

These cities seem to have been planted by the men from the sea on mud islands, which the Delta silt was constantly tending to join together and convert to low mounds in a plain—such "high hills" as a flood of fourteen cubits' height could submerge beneath a level expanse of waters. These cities were unlike Memphis and Thebes, which were merely clusters of human cells within the body of the State. The Egyptian cities were significantly unwalled; each Mesopotamian city was, and had to be, a fortress unto itself. Mr. Leonard Woolley's latest excavations at Ur have disclosed a stupendous work of combined military and civil engineering, in the shape of a rampart, moated by a canal, and serving at once as a defence and a revetment raising the whole city above flood level. Even when the silt had left the mud islands high and dry, the cities remained spiritually insular. Each had its own king, and its own god, of whom that king was the earthly representative, or *patesi*. It is true that there was theoretically a high god, Enlil of Nippur, to whom the other gods and their representatives paid obeisance, but he did not make much difference in practice, as his approval could be played, like

the joker at cards, in support of any profitable enterprise that any pious monarch liked to undertake. But no doubt Enlil did act as a means of stimulating a certain consciousness of Sumerian unity. The fact that too neighbouring cities, like Lagash and Umma, might hate each other as murderously as Athens and Corinth, did not hold them from a common consciousness that a god-fearing Sumerian was after all better than a heathen Amorite.

Unlike the Egyptians of the Old Kingdom, the citizens of the Tigris-Euphrates basin were, therefore, constantly engaged in the business of war. Not only were their cities fortresses, but garrisoned fortresses. A glance at one or two of their pictured relics will be enough to convince any soldier that here was a people among whom the art of war was studied as it never was in Egypt before the expulsion of the Shepherd Kings.

On a standard found in a grave at Ur, the birthplace of Abraham, and dated by Mr. Woolley at about 3500 B.C.—centuries before the probable date of the pyramids—we have a sufficiently lifelike representation of the city host. We see the ancestor of the tank corps in an ordered procession of fighting chariots, each drawn by four asses, and with apparently sufficient protection in front and at the sides. Each contained one driver and one spear thrower, whose spare missiles, adapted to long or short range, were carried in a quiver. They appear formidable fighting machines and even at that early period must have had a history behind them, though one is inclined to wonder how on rough ground the solid wooden wheels, whose two halves were clamped together, were prevented from coming apart. At anything like a pace, the jolting must have been fearful. We see the infantry, with their copper helmets and kilted uniforms, advancing with spears at the charge, in what is evidently meant to be column formation, against an enemy whose unclothed and disorderly appearance is in deliberate contrast with the fine military efficiency of the troops of Ur.*

Our most vivid sidelight on the nature of Sumerian city war is afforded by the famous Stele of the Vultures—or such fragments of it as have been recovered—which is of some six or seven

* See *Ur and the Sumerians* by C. Leonard Woolley, where this standard is reproduced.

centuries' later date than the Ur standard. This is a work executed for a certain Enneatum, monarch or *patesi* of Lagash, once a thriving port on the Persian gulf, but whose ruins now lie far inland. The chief rival of Lagash was another city called Umma, which lay at no great distance to the North. There was a treaty delimiting the boundaries of the two states, which, despite divine sanction, held exactly as long as neither party felt strong enough to violate it. The pious Enneatum seems to have obeyed a call to grab certain lands in the name of his god,* to which the reply of Umma was a surprise raid in quest of such loot as could be got away before the Lagash army could be mobilized. Then there was an invasion of Umma by the full force of Lagash, which gained a decisive victory and drove it home by the storm of the enemy capital. It is of this victory that the Stele of the Vultures tells.

The very title is significant, and is taken from the vultures who are exhibited carrying off portions of the slain—a form of gloating that is widespread among fighting peoples. There is a Highland invocation, set to the pibroch, and addressed to the birds of prey:

“Come to me and I will give you flesh,”

and Enneatum would have seen nothing extravagant in Peacock's glorious extravaganza:

“The eagles and the ravens
We glutted with our foemen,
The heroes and the cravens,
The spearmen and the bowmen.”

Evidently Enneatum was at the head of a highly trained and disciplined army. We see him in his chariot, followed by his troops—perhaps his guards—in column of route, spears at the slope. Again we see him dismounted, leading his phalanx into action, a solid column, bristling with levelled spears, and protected by huge bucklers held by men specially told off for the purpose. To manoeuvre such a body in the field must have required an amount of drill and training far beyond the scope of a civic horde called together for the need of the moment. It is impossible to survey this ancient stele without realizing that the art of war was already

* See *A History of Sumer and Akkad* by L. W. King, p. 121.

highly developed early in the third Millennium before Christ.

But the good Enneatum had no thought of taking the glory to himself. It is only on the reverse of the stele that he and his troops figure. These wars were not between men, but gods, and we see the divine Ningursu of Lagash, thumping with a club—very much in the style of Pharaoh Narmer—a number of the enemy whom he has caught in a net. The fate of prisoners, even at the hands of fellow Sumerians, was likely to be grim. But the men of Lagash were destined to realize that there might be a pathos even in war. This was when, in fullness of time, it became the turn of Umma to defeat and capture Lagash. Then indeed a heartrending cry went up to heaven, to the constantly repeated refrain:

“They have carried away the silver and the precious stones.”

It was natural that, situated as they were, the Sumerians should have specialized in war to an extent never dreamed of by the contemporary Egyptians. But for all that, it was war that was destined to extinguish their civilization, and we can accept Mr. Woolley’s verdict that “the ruthless character of the wars between the city-states was one of the reasons for the decay of Sumerian power, and the final disappearance of the Sumerians.”* The wastage involved in chronic and savage struggles of city against city must have been enormous, and without any compensating gain. In fact, apart from this direct wastage, there resulted the inevitable growth of a specialized military caste, a standing army maintained at the public expense, that gradually superseded the old burgher militia, and became more and more a force of paid mercenaries, having no civic patriotism, and less and less Sumerian blood as time went on. “It was,” once again to quote Mr. Woolley, “the familiar story of military specialization and mercenary service leading to national decay.”

It would be not far from the truth to say that the fatal weakness of Sumerian civilization consisted in the inability of the head god, Enlil, to become more than a *dieu fainéant*. All public activities, including peace and war, were affairs of the gods, acting through their crowned *patesis*. If the Zeus of Nippur had been able to bind his minor deities, and through them the cities

* Op. cit., p. 58.

of the Delta, into some effective union, Sumerian civilization might have perpetuated itself, and proved capable of making head against intrusive Semites and mountaineers.

It was not to be. The history of the Tigris-Euphrates Basin records one long struggle on the part of first this power and then that to unite the whole area, as the Nile Valley had been by the Pharaohs, under one safe and stable government. But to however splendid a height this or that conqueror might raise his power, he could never be free from menace, and not once, but many times, must the vision have appeared of a handwriting on the palace wall—"God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it."

Semites from the desert were the first to descend upon the plains, and we hear of the first of the world's great conquerors, Sargon of Akkad, establishing some sort of Empire from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, though how much this implied, beyond the achievement of successful raids, we have insufficient evidence to determine. Sargon's grandson, Naram Sin, appears to have been an equally great commander, and he has left us a stele that far surpasses that of the Vultures as a work of art. Here we see the King staving off one perpetual menace by leading an expedition into the mountains. The artist has selected the crowning moment when the King lowers his spear as the enemy kneels in submission. There is something in the towering and majestic figure of this bearded Semite that puts one in mind of the Arthur of medieval legend.

But Naram Sin might as well have struck into the air as into the hills. There was never a time when the dwellers in the Mesopotamian plain could sleep quietly in their beds for more than a very brief season. The Akkadian Empire vanished in its turn, leaving behind only a legend; a flood of barbarians from the North East submerged the plains; there was a Sumerian revival and an Empire of Ur; and then the Sumerians fade out of history and the Semitic power of Babylon steps to the front and enters upon the heritage of Sumerian civilization. Hittites from Asia Minor begin to take part in the game, and the unstable Empire built up by the Babylonian law-giver, Hammurabi, only needed the shock of a successful raid to bring about its collapse. After more vicissitudes, there emerges the most formidable power

of all, that of Kurdish Assyria, and the centre of political gravity shifts from the Southern to the Northern part of the Basin. But even this great conquering Empire, whose ruthlessness and military efficiency have never been surpassed, was as incompetent as its predecessors to solve the age-long riddle of Mesopotamian security. A bubble empire, its culmination of splendour was in the hour of fullest inflation just before it burst.

We have selected the instances of these two river valley civilizations, in order to show the way in which war and militarism have developed with the advance of civilization. The cause of this development is not to be sought for in any ingrained pugnacity or original sin in Man's nature. It has simply been that he has, in the mass, been incapable of commanding the conditions of his own life. Left to himself, he is content to work out his destinies in peace, as in the Old Kingdom of Egypt. And if we want other instances, we may take that of the recently unearthed Indus Valley civilization, whose ruins have disclosed no evidences of warlike activity, and the rather more doubtful one of Minoan Crete, whose cities were certainly unfortified and whose navies have left no mark on history, though the legend of the Minotaur certainly hints at an oppressive and tribute-exacting dominance over some part of the Grecian mainland.

Man has not lusted to fight, but he has been caught up in a chain of causes beyond his control. For civilization to develop, a certain area of unified control may be necessary, and men have seldom had the collective wisdom to take a step so vital to their well-being as that of agreeing to secure it. Force has been the only argument, a wasteful and destructive argument at best, and by no means always decisive. Menes and the first Pharaohs were indeed successful in uniting the Nile Valley with the Delta, but not even the mighty power of Assyria was capable of doing as much for the Mesopotamian Basin. The best that fighting could do there was, at an incalculable cost of life and wealth, to secure an unstable equilibrium for a short span of years. With each fresh collapse of a ruling power, more and more of the energies of civilization came to be devoted to the competition in slaughter and destruction.

Then, again, as long as the wild barbarian is able to meet the city-dweller, or agriculturist, manful under shield, without too

great a disparity of weapons, so long will the blessings of civilization be held on a precarious tenure. The reaction of the barbarian, confronted with the spectacle of wealth and luxury, will always be that of old Field-Marshal Blücher, who, after being shown the sights of London, could only express his delight by the exclamation, "Was für plunder!" In ancient times, the advantage of weapons by no means always went along with superior culture. Civilized man had only his organization and discipline to oppose to perpetually encroaching barbarism. Accordingly he was constrained to divert more and more of his energies to the prosecution of war, more and more of his wealth to providing its sinews. And where the treasure was, there would the heart be also, until the strange paradox was realized of civilization leading to the increased ferocity of human nature, and the multiplication of destructive and unproductive human activity.

CHAPTER VIII

THE QUINTESSENCE OF MILITARISM

SURVIVAL of the fittest was a catch phrase to which immense importance was attached towards the close of last century. Taken by itself it amounts to nothing more than the indisputable fact that in any form of eliminating competition, the survivors survive. But most people, when they talked about survival of the fittest, were oscillating vaguely between two ideas of fitness—those of strength and goodness. The average Victorian, with his capacity for making the best of all worlds, wept at the spectacle of dragons tearing one another in their slime, but comforted himself with the larger hope that good would somehow be the final goal of ill. The best fighters would somehow be, and breed, the somehow best dragons. Only one didn't talk about goodness. There was a notion—decently unformulated like most notions of the time—that such talk was hardly scientific. It was, of course, tacitly agreed that it was better to be a human being than a microscopic blob, and it followed logically that the process by which the blob became the direct ancestor of Queen Victoria and Darwin was one of getting better and better. But logic, so popular with the Schoolmen, had become a little *démodé* in a scientific age. It was better, and simpler, to go ahead trusting in Lord Tennyson's Great Somehow.

Difficulties, however, began to multiply when it was a question of applying what passed for the Darwinian Theory to human society. Were we to make Carlyle's stomach and Nietzsche's nerves our counsellors, and cheerfully assume that might and right were the same thing? Certainly we might, if, like another great figure of their age, we were feeling "so dispoged." But we might equally well argue, with Huxley, that a moral sense was a later and higher product of evolution than

"The good old rule, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power, and they should keep
who can."

It all comes down to what you mean by goodness. It is one thing to accept the fact of evolution; it is one quite different to decide whether or not evolution is on the right track, whether we ought to be asserting ourselves with Nietzsche or denying ourselves with Christ, whether the blonde beast or the saint is our ideal of manhood.

We have been brought face to face with this problem of survival in our account of how war began to fasten itself on to developing civilization. In those two primary civilizations of the river valleys, Mesopotamia and Egypt, we have watched the competition for survival drawing human societies into a merciless tooth and claw struggle, and transferring more and more of their energies from the war of Man against nature to that of Man against Man. We have seen for how long a period Egypt, owing to her uniquely sheltered position, was able to evade what we might call the Darwinian necessity. In Mesopotamia, that necessity was urgent from the beginning. Every community as soon as it was formed had to fight for its life. It had not only to fight, but to conquer. It was better to go out and smite the Barbarian in his own fastnesses than to wait upon his chosen hour for swarming into the plains. To conquer your neighbours in good time was the best way to prevent them from conquering you. Empire building might have been regarded as a form of national life insurance.

Thus we see the struggle for survival evolving the military and imperialist state, the community specialized more and more for purposes of destruction. And inevitably so—we are tempted to say. But that word "inevitable" is one of the most easily abused as applied to human affairs. Man has a fate that compels him, but also a faculty of reason capable, to an ever-increasing extent, of controlling fate. There are communities that have yielded, body and soul, to the Darwinian necessity, and have devoted practically the whole of their energies to the struggle for survival. Such have been Assyria, Sparta, Prussia. But there have been other communities that have approached, in varying degrees, the ideal that civilized life is an end, and its insurance, by war, only a means. By one device or another they have limited their commitments in the struggle of all against all, and applied a substantial proportion of their energies to the business of living well.

We have seen what a fallacy it is to suppose that animals are perpetually, or mainly, engaged in struggling for survival with others of their own species. But we can certainly speak of some animals as having specialized themselves for offensive purposes more than others. The carnivora, the birds of prey, the sharks and dogfish, might be fairly described as militarized vertebrates. But it is not through these orders that life has climbed to its human summit. It is not the claw that has developed in a hand. The tiger, burning bright, is destined to burn himself out in his forests.

If there is any analogy to be drawn between the human and animal worlds, we should not expect the most aggressive and predatory communities to stand high in the scale of civilization, or in the main path of its upward progress. It would be flying in the face of fact as well as of language to expect that any thoroughly militarized nation could be proportionately civilized.

Let us return for a moment to the Tigris-Euphrates Basin. That precarious Eden was a veritable cockpit, in which Sumerians, Semites, Elamites, and hordes from the Northern hinterland, had played King of the Castle since the dawn of recorded time. There was no particular reason why the plain of the Upper Tigris, which was the Assyrian home-land, should become the seat of a mighty empire. The cause must be sought in the fighting qualities of its peasantry—the ancestors of the modern Kurds—and in the single-hearted concentration of the whole community on the business of war.

There were, in point of fact, three Assyrian Empires. It is as if we were watching the attempt of a Titan to support the world on his shoulders. Twice he staggers to his feet, twice he drops exhausted on to one knee, then, with a supreme effort, he rises for a third time and looks round with a smile of triumph, until, all of a sudden, he collapses and lies, crushed and buried, forever.

Short of conquering the whole world, or, at any rate, a far wider world than was dreamed of at Nineveh, there was no rest for Assyria. On every side were enemies, and beyond, in the unknown, other enemies. Even the most ruthless of powers could not exterminate all its neighbours, and short of extermination there was no means of preventing the subjects of one

day from becoming the rebels of the next. Something could be done by the method of transferring whole populations, like that of Northern Israel, from one part of the Empire to another. But when it came to Babylon, further down the river, the problem was insoluble. Sennacherib, of Biblical and Byronic fame, might take the city and sack it; his son, Esarhaddon, might go to the other extreme of conciliation—both policies were equally in vain. It was a Viceroy of Babylon who was destined to be in at the death of Nineveh.

Truly might any of the Great Kings, the Kings of Assyria, have cried with Macbeth,

"They have tied me to a stake, I cannot fly,
And bearlike I must fight the course,"

and accordingly we see them, from the first moment to the last of their reigns, sallying forth at the head of their armies, striking out desperately to all points of the compass, for dear life's sake. At first they set forth, when the harvest has been gathered, as annual raiders and blackmailers, collecting tribute from the pliant, and helping themselves where tribute is refused. Finally there begin to emerge the rudiments of an administrative system for making the tribute permanent and garrisoning conquered districts. But not so is even momentary security to be attained.

The Assyrians found time to leave a record of themselves and the spirit that was in them. More plainly than words speak their colossal winged bulls, surely the most soulless and sinister works of art ever fashioned by man, embodiments of all that is cruel, sensual, egoistic, and yet instinct with a terrible strength. When we read the records that successive monarchs have bequeathed of their own deeds, we might be listening to the voice of one of these monsters.

Let us take the memoirs of one of the greatest of them, Assurnasir-pal, who lived in the ninth century, B.C., and was largely instrumental in building up the third and greatest Assyrian Empire. There is a small portrait statue of him in the British Museum, and the face is not wholly unlike those of the human bulls, except that it is somewhat more pleasing, expressive of an earnest and humourless pride rather than positive cruelty. Assur-nasir-pal was, according to his lights, a simple, god-fearing man. His

lie was devoted to the service of Assyria and her god Assur. He undertook nothing beyond his strength, and in all that he undertook he succeeded. He must have been, according to Assyrian ideas, the very pattern of a hero king. He was indeed something more than a hero; the crook grasped in his sculptured hand reveals the shepherd of his human flock, "the wonderful shepherd . . . the sun of all peoples . . . who slaughtered those that disobeyed him and cut the throats of warriors,"* as he himself puts it.

As we peruse this Good Shepherd's simple but monotonous record of massacre, torture, and devastation, we are forced to the astonishing conviction that he has a perfectly clear conscience of duty done. Here is one typical entry: "I built a pillar over against his city gate, and I slayed all the chief men who had revolted, and I covered the pillar with their skins; some I walled up within the pillar, some I impaled upon the pillar on stakes, and others I bound to stakes round about the pillar; many within the border of my own land I slayed, and I spread their skins upon the walls; and I cut off the limbs of the officers, of the royal officers who had rebelled. Ahiababa I took to Nineveh, I slayed him, I spread his skin upon the wall of Nineveh . . . at that time I fashioned a heroic image of my royal self,"† having, in fact, done all that could be expected of a Good Shepherd and Sun of Assyrian Righteousness.

An entry, almost an aside, in this remarkable record, is to the effect that the author had caused all the young men and maidens who fell into his hands to be burned with fire, while, "I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire," is a phrase as characteristic of Assur-nasir-pal as "and so to bed," of Mr. Pepys.

Here, in the only literature that Assyria could produce, her spirit is revealed. These kings and their people had no time for introspection; they could not afford the luxury of a dream or a vision. Nineveh could never produce an epic like the Gilgamesh saga of Babylon, in which the hero's chief concern is with the mystery of death and the quest for immortality. These fighting kings had to be up and doing. Conquest was the treadmill to which they were bound for the term of their natural lives. Such

* *Ancient Record of Assyria* by D. D. Luckenbill. Vol. I, p. 172.
 † *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 145.

snatches of leisure as they had were employed in the pursuit of the lion and the wild bull. Their writings are Books of Acts, because action was the only thing that they, and their gods, cared about. To preserve and strengthen Assyria was their supreme end, and if this could best be done by massacre, plunder, or treachery, then these means would have been justified, could it ever have occurred to an Assyrian that justification was necessary for those who served Assur.

For the two centuries following the reign of Assur-nasir-pal, the Assyrian armies went forth conquering and to conquer. They had a winning advantage in being the first of the Eastern hosts to adopt iron weapons, and there was also iron in the men and their discipline. The raiding militia developed into a trained standing army, with a proficiency not only in tactics but in siege-craft that made it almost invincible. But the Assyrian peasantry were being dragged from the work of production to that of destruction; industry was starved; even the irrigation system began to suffer. Meanwhile the strength and magnificence of the Empire had towered to a height beyond all human precedent. Had not the time come when the struggle for existence could be suspended, and the conquerors devote a little of their energy to the task of beautifying and enjoying life?

The last of the great Assyrian monarchs, Assur-bani-pal, seems to have had something of this sort in his mind. He was a very different person from those men of iron, his predecessors. His father had given him the education of a scholar. We are, to this day, much in his debt, for it was his pleasure to accumulate the first of the world's great libraries. He appears to have been less bound to the routine of sport and slaughter than any other Assyrian monarch. He left most of the fighting to his generals and of the lion-killing to his huntsmen. He is perhaps the only person in Assyrian history who shows the least traces of tender feeling. Assur-nasir-pal must have turned in his grave when one of his successors could glory in being "the kind hearted, who does not keep a grudge, who forgives transgressions," * and who actually took pity on a rebel king who had implored his forgiveness.

But the destiny of the Assyrian monarchy was not to be evaded.

* Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 303.

Though Nineveh had become a city of splendour and luxury unimagined hitherto, though her Empire stretched from the Nile almost to the Caspian, her danger had not lessened with the increase of her power. Assur-bani-pal must have been praying from his heart when he besought his god Nabu not to forsake him in the midst of his enemies, a term that might well have included the greater proportion of his nominal subjects. For his life-time the danger was held at arm's length. Except for the loss of Egypt—which was probably a blessing in disguise—Assur-bani-pal was able to bequeath an Empire as splendid as he had received.

And yet, from this Grand Monarch of the East, full of years, riches and victories, there comes a sudden and startling cry of despair. Why is it, the old King asks, that he who has done good to God and man, should be beset by disease, heartache, distress and destruction? Enmity abroad, strife at home, never depart from him; disturbances, evil words, continually beset him; distress of body and soul have bowed his form.

“Death is making an end of me, is weighing me down . . . I sigh, ‘O God, to the one who fears not, give these afflictions. Let me see thy light! How long, O God, wilt thou do thus to me?’” *

It is not from the lips of a King of Assyria that we should have expected to hear the cry that in a later age was to darken the sun:

“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

The nemesis of a military empire has indeed come upon the royal scholar. There is, he now realizes, no escape. Every victory is but a reprieve of the death sentence pronounced by another seer of the inevitable, the prophet Nahum:

“Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her?”

It was hopeless to dream of making life beautiful under such circumstances. The best that could be attained was a certain heavy magnificence of architecture, a sculpture utterly lacking in soul and personality, and some rich craftsmanship, mostly by foreign workmen. But of a literature, a philosophy, anything worthy the name of culture, there was and could be none. As-

* Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 377-78.

syrian energies must be continually directed outward, and even so, they were insufficient, in the long run, for the task of self-preservation. They were strained almost to breaking point in the last years of Assur-bani-pal.

The catastrophe followed his death with appalling swiftness. Barbarians from the North, hillsmen from the East, revolted Chaldeans from the South, closed in upon the doomed empire, and her resources were not equal to the call. Nineveh was overthrown, and the drifted sands completed what the enemy had begun, so that only a few desert mounds marked the site of the great city.

Another example of the completely militarized state is furnished by Sparta. In the early days of this Dorian settlement in the Eurotas valley, there seemed no reason why Sparta should not have developed on the lines of Athens or any other Greek city. There was a time when Sparta stood in the forefront of Greek culture. She may fairly be called the mother of Greek music. Her court was the resort of lyric and epic poets. Some of the earliest Greek sculpture was the work of Spartan hands. But when Sparta comes into the full light of history, all is changed. The muses have forsaken the banks of the Eurotas. The city has become a barracks; the energies of the citizens are devoted to this sole purpose—that when the Spartan heavy-armed infantry advances to the charge, it shall crash through everything in front of it.

What has caused this change? Why is it that the Spartans should voluntarily have foregone all of the glory that was Greece, except the glory of Thermopylae? The answer is simple, and is contained in one sentence of *The Cambridge Ancient History*:

“They had successfully denied the rights of man to nine-tenths of the inhabitants of their land.”

In consequence of which, according to the same authority, “they knew that they were living on a volcano.” *

The Spartans had reduced to serfdom, or helotage, the original inhabitants, not only of their own Laconia, but of the neighbouring Messenia. They had had to fight hard and long to impose their yoke. But—what was much worse—they had to remain in a continual state of war to keep it imposed. This was

* Vol. III, p. 558.

not only actually but even formally true, for with their clear-cut Greek logic, the Spartans actually made it a custom for their ephors, on entering upon their annual term of office, to declare war on the Helots, which provided a sufficient excuse for any Spartan who might take it into his head to murder one of them. There was also a veritable Cheka, or Ku Klux Klan, consisting of young Spartans, with a roving commission to make away with any Helot whom they might fancy to be dangerous. Such a system may inspire fear, but it will kindle hatred in an equal degree. As Aristotle, that shrewdest of observers, points out, the Helots are perpetually on the lookout to take advantage of any misfortune that may befall their masters. As the neighbours of Sparta were also without exception her enemies, the Helots never lacked encouragement to revolt. In short, as Aristotle dryly observes, the Spartans have not discovered the best way of governing subjects.

For something like three centuries Sparta did gain her immediate objects of an invincible infantry and a crushed Helotage—but at what a cost! The Spartans may have become as insensitive to pain as Red Indians—they were even more insensitive to beauty. Not even beauty of character was conspicuous among them. Sir Frederick Pollock describes them as “the most odious impostors in the whole history of antiquity,” and points out that, for all their vaunted discipline, “they produced in the whole course of their wars only two officers who are known to have been gentlemen, Brasidas and Callicratidas.”* In spite of their carefully cultivated simplicity, selfishness, avarice, and bad faith were qualities for which they became notorious in their public and private dealings, and for the Eighth Commandment of Sinai they substituted the mythical eleventh: “Thou shalt not be found out.” The Spartans are right, says Aristotle, in holding that goods are to be obtained by virtue, but wrong in preferring goods to virtue itself. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

For, again to follow that most penetrating analysis of the Philosopher, the whole object of Spartan legislation is to produce one sort of virtue, that of the soldier. This was all very well so long as Sparta was at war, but as soon as war was crowned by

* *History of the Science of Politics*, p. 11.

conquest, her power began to go to pieces. This was because the Spartans had never learnt to live a life of leisure, or acquire any better discipline than that of war. The Empire, that they had won, they could not keep.

But then, it may be said, the Spartans were artists, if only of the art of war. Certainly their armies were never conquered, so long as they could get the enemy to play their own game, and oppose infantry in line to the frontal attack of their hoplites. But nowhere did they display any military talent higher than that of the drill sergeant.

Their most glorious achievement, the sacrifice of King Leonidas and his bodyguard in the Pass of Thermopylæ, was a blunder as gross as the sacrifice of the Light Brigade, if indeed it was not worse, for it was little short of criminal to have exposed Leonidas, with a small and mixed army, unsupported in that advanced position to the onslaught of overwhelming numbers. The fact is that the Spartans were in two minds whether to follow their natural inclinations and, abandoning Athens, to wall themselves in on the Isthmus of Corinth, or to make some show of supporting their Athenian allies, without whose fleet their wall might have been turned from the sea. When, after Athens had been sacked and the Persian naval power broken at Salamis, the full Spartan army did at last venture to take the field, their King, Pansanias, after being outmanœuvred by the enemy commander, and having lost the strategical game, recouped himself tactically by a well-timed charge, in which the Persians, behind their wicker shield-wall, were scattered like chaff at the impact of the Spartan hoplites.

In their long war against Athens, the only brilliant move on the part of the Spartans, that of planting a permanent garrison on Athenian territory at Decelea, was made on the advice of a renegade Athenian, Alcibiades.

Again, when a force, mainly Spartan, marched with Prince Cyrus into Mesopotamia, to help him seize the Persian crown from his brother Artaxerxes, the decisive battle was lost owing to the truly Spartan stupidity of its leader, Clearchus, and his inability to grasp a tactical situation. He insisted on marching straight forward on the right, regardless of the fact that he had only to wheel inwards to roll up the King's centre. Out of the

quandary in which the unhappy "ten-thousand" found themselves involved, when their employer, thus left unsupported, had been cut down, and their principal commanders had lost their lives by allowing a Persian satrap to play the confidence trick, it needed an Athenian and a pupil of Socrates to deliver them.

It was not long after this that another Athenian, Iphicrates, pitted his brains against the brute force of Spartan discipline, and overcame a detached column of hoplites with a new kind of light infantry. But this was only a prelude to the catastrophe that was to destroy, for good and all, the legend of Spartan invincibility. A Theban commander, Epaminondas, thought out the simple tactical device of strengthening his left wing while refusing his right. The reinforced column, its outer flank duly protected by cavalry, crashed on a narrow frontage and in great depth into the picked troops of the Spartan right. The victory was complete. And when, nine years later, Epaminondas tried the same manœuvre upon them again, the Spartans showed that they had learnt nothing and forgotten nothing. They came on, as Wellington would have said, in the old way, and were beaten in the old way.

Even as fighters, the Spartans seem to have had the stupidity as well as the courage of the bulldog. Greeks though they were, their civilization does not compare favourably even with that of Assyria. Sparta was not to be compared with Nineveh for the splendour of its buildings or the beauty of their contents. She never produced a monarch half as interesting as Assur-bani-pal, or anything to compare with his great library. Perhaps this was due to the Greek instinct for following ideas to their logical conclusions. The Assyrians were militarized, because they were continually faced with the choice between world-power and downfall. But the Spartans, though militarization was forced upon them too by their need of controlling their Helots, were capable of making a virtue of that necessity and sanctioning it by their free choice, a choice symbolized by their proud refusal to fortify their city. It was Apollo himself who was believed to have inspired their laws.* Their constitution was regarded throughout Greece as a thing of beauty, a work of the highest art. If ever militarism had a chance of showing what it could

* *A History of Greece* by J. B. Bury, p. 134.

do, when given full play under the most favourable possible circumstances, it was at Sparta. What it did was to stifle art, to stultify intelligence, and turn a city that had promised to be in the forefront of Greek civilization into a breeding place of boors.

The fate of Assyria, in the ancient East, and of Sparta, in classical Greece, is closely paralleled by that of Prussia, which has stood for the same principle of uncompromising militarism in modern Europe. Here we have the same dance of death, to the same old tunes. The lot of the Lacedæmonian Helot was not altogether unlike that of the peasant in pre-nineteenth century Prussia. The Mark of Brandenburg, and the Duchy of Prussia, to which it was united in 1618, were border provinces, the mixed population of which had to be conquered and held down by a rough Teutonic baronage whose descendants were the Junkers. In that level and wind-swept expanse of pastures, of marshes, and of pine woods, there was no chance for freedom and very little for culture to develop, but much for Spartan valour and power of command among the rulers, and disciplined obedience among the ruled. Wends, Poles, Lithuanians, required centuries of drill to force them into the mould of Teutonic civilization. Drill has, in fact, been the dominant motive of Prussian history.

The Prussian state resembled the Assyrian, in that it never had any natural frontiers to give it even the illusion of security. It is no wonder that, in the opening years of this century, the idea that they were being encircled haunted the German people with all the power of an obsession. For Prussia, at any rate, had lived for centuries in a state of encirclement. Like Assyria, she felt herself compelled to be perpetually expanding in order not to be crushed. To such an expansion there were no limits short, ultimately, of world domination.

This necessity of perpetually being on the military or diplomatic offensive did not tend to diminish in the course of centuries. No sooner was the pressure of Swedish imperialism relaxed from the North, than the gigantic menace of Russia began to take shape in the East. There was the chronic hostility of the Hapsburg Empire in the South, and the great and aggressive military power of France to the West. As late as 1711, Prussia had to submit to the humiliation of allowing an army of Russians,

Saxons and Poles to march unceremoniously across her homeland of Brandenburg, much as the German armies of a later day were to march across Belgium.

Under these circumstances Prussia had no choice but to become the Sparta of Germany. There was no scope within her borders for the dreamy and introspective turn of mind of which German culture was born. A ruthless and disciplined efficiency was the Prussian ideal, and of that ideal the purest exponents were to be found among her conspicuously able line of rulers.

Just as we find the spirit of Assyria taking form in the person of Assur-nasir-pal, so we find that of Prussia, emphasized to the point of caricature, incarnate in Frederick William I, father of Frederick the Great. There was a time when this sovereign was regarded, not altogether unnaturally, as an inhuman monster, only half sane. But thanks largely to Carlyle, it is now realized, even in England, that this was the man of all others who saw what part Prussia had to play, and put her in the way of playing it. He was, according to his own and his country's lights, a most efficient ruler. He came to the throne just two years after that episode of the violation of Prussian territory. When, in 1740, he died, he had raised the dignity of an undistinguished German state to that of a European power.

But the first estimate of his character is not thereby invalidated. The fact of Frederick William's being the most distinctively Prussian of all Prussian sovereigns, did not prevent him from being a man almost wholly devoid of culture, and of any fine or tender feelings. He had no use for such things, nor any tolerance for their possessors. His father, the first King of Prussia, had aspired to be a patron of the arts, of science, and of letters. He had been a great builder, and desired to have a brilliant court, on the model of Versailles. Frederick William was quick to perceive that a state that could not protect its own territory could not afford the luxuries of civilization. He promptly cut down his father's court establishment by half, and though, during his reign, he encouraged elementary education, in all matters of higher culture he showed himself one of the most redoubtable Philistines that have ever sat on a throne. But he did most effectively what he set out to do. Without going to war—except once, and that not seriously—he succeeded in so

completely militarizing Prussia that he expanded her army from 38,000 to 80,000 of the best drilled troops in Europe; and so great was his economy that he actually ended up his reign with a substantial reserve fund of savings.

It was because he felt Prussia's need of sacrificing everything to martial efficiency, that he turned with such savage resentment against his gifted and cultured son, who afterwards became Frederick the Great. That the heir to his throne should go whoring after French culture, that he should prefer letters and music to military routine, must have foreboded to Frederick William the ruin of his life's work. At all costs, even if it were of his son's life, the devil of civilization must be exorcised. The flute was broken, the French books confiscated, a tutor who threatened to infect the youth with Latin was cudgelled from the room; every imaginable hardship and indignity was employed to break the young prince's spirit. And when, in despair, poor Frederick dreamed of escaping, he was tried by court-martial and only just missed being done to death at his father's behest.

The most amazing thing about this course of education was that it succeeded. In all essentials, Frederick William did manage to turn out a Prussian ruler after his own heart. After the episode of his court-martial and imprisonment, Frederick seems to have decided that it was vain for him to kick against the pricks. He became subject to his father not only in conduct but in spirit. Even after Frederick William's death, so far from resenting his tyranny, the son honoured his memory. The veneer of French culture he did indeed retain, but beneath the surface he was wholly Prussian, and militarist.

By his first stroke of policy, he committed himself deliberately to a struggle in which the energies and resources of his little kingdom must needs be strained to the uttermost. He seized one of the provinces of his neighbour, Austria, an act of brigandage shameless even by eighteenth century standards. He was then committed to maintaining what he had won against a coalition, ultimately, of all the chief land powers in Europe. Maintain it he did, though he brought his army and country to the point of exhaustion. He thereby set the seal on his father's work, and paved the way for the Empire of Blood and Iron that was to unite Germany under Prussian leadership.

But in gaining so much, the musician and man of letters, whose pen had pointed to a saner ideal than the Machiavellian egotism of eighteenth century statecraft, had surrendered his own soul. The father, though dead, was stronger than the son. For the rulers of Prussia, like those of Assyria, there was no escape from the tyranny of perpetual, unreflective action. For them there could be no inner castle or paradise of the soul. Fighting, working, and drilling demanded the whole energies of a Hohenzollern life-time.

From the time of the greatest to that of the last crowned scion of the House, we watch this Prussian gospel of disciplined activity gradually prevailing over the soulful and dreamy German culture. For Germany was forced, in the long run, to accept the services of the Prussian drill-sergeant, even if it involved the sacrifice of all that had hitherto been most distinctive of her civilization. To put it in the jargon of modern psychology, a nation of introverts had got to be drilled into one of extroverts.

From a practical point of view, there was much to be said in favour of such a conversion. The same remorseless necessity that had driven Prussia to devote all her energies to the struggle for survival, was driving Germany to wage that struggle under Prussian leadership. Her music and philosophy, her dreams and speculations, had availed her nothing against aggression from without and disunion among her multitude of states and cities. She had been through the dreadful experience of the Thirty Years' War, when armies of hired ruffians had marched all over her territory, living at free quarters on the inhabitants, ravishing, torturing, pillaging, turning a smiling land into a depopulated desert. In the eighteenth century, she was divided among petty despots whom foreign powers played off in arms against one another, and who did not shrink from hiring out their own subjects to shed their blood in the quarrels of anybody who would pay for them.

From this state of things Prussian leadership delivered Germany. It was the victories of Frederick the Great that first stimulated a consciousness of unity and a corresponding patriotism. It was Prussia, a chastened and reformed Prussia, that became the spear-head of Germany in her War of Liberation

from Napoleon. It was by Prussian blood and iron that the chaos of independent sovereignties was transformed into one united empire, the most powerful of European states. But even so, the fate of a now Prussianized Germany was still that of Assyria. The hour of supreme power was also that of supreme peril. The spectre of encirclement assumed terrifying dimensions. Germany thought herself confronted with the choice between world-power and downfall. An impulse of self-preservation drove her on to arm, with feverish energy, by sea as well as by land. And finally necessity—the tyrant's perfectly sincere plea—drove her to hack through neutral Belgium in order to strike down the nearest of her ring of enemies. Such was the Dance of Death to which Prussian militarism committed Germany.

And yet there is something not wholly ignoble about the Prussian ideal. Nobody can read Treitschke's great uncompleted history of modern Germany, which is a prose epic of Prussianization, without catching some little of the enthusiasm that made this book a historical force. Courage, loyalty, discipline, self-sacrifice—these are the qualities by virtue of which, according to Treitschke, it was granted to Prussia to redeem Germany. As to what Germany may have lost in the process of redemption, this was of no account to the stern, single-hearted and politically minded professor, to whom, even in Milton, the politician seemed of greater importance than the poet.

Treitschke was a Saxon—and it is remarkable to what an extent, throughout her history, Prussia has had to borrow her brains from outside. Frederick the Great, though half a Prussian by birth, was, until broken in to Prussianism by his father, French by sympathy and education. Schornhorst, Stein, Gneisenau, Blücher, Hardenberg, Fichte, Hegel, Clausewitz, Moltke, were non-Prussians. Such genius as the Junker class could produce seemed to reside in the sole personality of Bismarck, in the nineteenth, as of Hindenburg in the twentieth century. As for Prussian culture, while Prussia was still a separate kingdom, its history is that of one man, Kleist, a tragic but intensely significant figure of the Napoleonic epoch, who has been described, not without reason, as Prussia's representative man.

The greatest of Kleist's dramas, one in which all that is noblest

and narrowest in the Prussian spirit is enshrined, is that entitled *Prince Friedrich von Homburg*. The scene of this is laid in the time of the Great Elector, the Frederick William who won the first of Prussia's great historic victories over the Swedes, at Fehrbellin. The hero is less a figure of the seventeenth century than a typical young German romantic of the nineteenth, a rather Byronic personage, who has conquered the heart of the Elector's niece, Princess Nathalie. Unfortunately, he allows romance to interfere with his prosaic duties as a Prussian officer, and when the orders for the battle are being dictated, overnight, by the chief-of-staff, he is in the clouds, dreaming of Nathalie. In consequence, when the battle is at its height, he seizes what he takes to be a golden opportunity of launching a decisive charge, and the Swedes are driven from their main position, but before the Elector's dispositions are complete for cutting off their retreat.

In consequence, Prince von Homburg is acclaimed a hero, and then—with his laurels fresh on his brow—is arrested by the Elector's order, court-martialled for disobedience, and condemned to be shot, as a later Frederick William was on the verge of condemning his own son. The romantic courage of the young man breaks down hopelessly when confronted with the grim reality of his open grave. He grovels for life; he is even ready to resign the hand of his Princess; he sends her begging on his behalf to the not unkindly old Elector. Then the drama rises to its climax. The Elector asks his niece whether she has ever heard of what "we in the camp call Fatherland." He will not put his opinion against that of so distinguished an officer as the Prince. Let him write two lines to the effect that his sentence is unjust, and his sword shall at once be restored.

We can guess the sequel. The Prince, made his own judge, put upon the honour of a Prussian officer, must needs confirm his own death-warrant. "I cannot," he says—and the words are surely among the noblest in dramatic literature—"act dishonourably to one who has acted so honourably to me." There the drama might end, and the last scene, in which Nathalie places a laurel wreath on the brows of her blindfolded hero in front of the firing party, and all ends happily to the accompaniment of hurrahs and cannon salvos, merely shows that Kleist's dramatic

technique is not capable of sustaining him at the height of the great argument to which he has risen.

To be a good Prussian is thus to be a perfectly disciplined servant of the State. There is no room for the development of the individual on his own lines. The young Körner, the patriot bard of the War of Liberation, had indeed written,

"God that made the iron grow
Willed not to see a slave,"

but the kind of freedom which Körner, and Prussia, desired, was that of the whole nation from foreign bondage. This may be the beginning, but it is not, by itself, the fulfilment of freedom.

It was something more profound and comprehensive that Kant had in view when he found freedom in the fulfilment of the law graven on every man's moral consciousness, when Goethe wrote

"He only earns his freedom and existence
Who daily conquers them anew."

Such freedom is not to be sought in the blind obedience of the parade ground.

It is true that Hegel, in his comfortable post as professor of philosophy at Berlin, did his obscure best to effect the marriage of that inner freedom to the principles of Prussian militarized bureaucracy. But the union was too unnatural to be consummated. The kind of freedom that is purchased by such a surrender of the will as Prussia and Sparta demanded, is hardly to be distinguished from slavery, and is certainly not compatible with any civilization worthy the name.

CHAPTER IX

SINEWS OF WAR

THE story that we have had to tell might with equal plausibility be described as one of the rise, and one of the fall of Man. We have watched the institution of organized war growing up side by side with civilization, and like some parasitic growth, absorbing more and more of the human energy that might otherwise have been devoted to realizing the kingdom of heaven on earth. We have dwelt upon the extreme instances of certain communities, Assyria, Sparta, and Prussia, in which so much energy has been demanded and absorbed by the parasite that the host has been starved.

It is now time to look somewhat more closely into the relations between host and parasite, with a view to ascertaining as precisely as possible the nature of the demands that war makes upon the community that specializes in it.

The further back we go in the history of life, the more difficult it becomes to estimate the difference that the exercise of combative activities makes to any creature's general well-being. The animal fights as instinctively as, though less regularly than, it eats and sleeps. It is comparatively seldom that it is specialized for combat among members of its own species. The lion's teeth and claws are for hunting, though they may chance to come in useful at the mating season. The bulls are the natural protectors of the herd, though we have the instance, already cited, of antelopes who have contrived to develop curved horns for duelling purposes. Speaking generally, the business of fighting his own kind occupies a less important part of the average beast's activities than believers in natural selection used to imagine.

In primitive societies of men, combat between individuals has been reduced to negligible proportions, and war comes into being as an instinctive communal activity, not very clearly distinguishable from that of hunting the beast. Hence the difficulty of say-

ing at what point in our record we have the first traces of war. If men fought at all, it was with the same implements as served them in the chase. Flint axes and arrows came into existence in the war of Man against Beast, though their advantages in human dispute must have been obvious even to the most primitive intelligence. But as with Red Indians, man-hunting and beast-hunting were not dissimilar phases of one kind of activity.

It needs the development of property to turn man-hunting and instinctive combat into what we may dignify by the name of war. The primitive hunter's property consisted mainly in the weapons and tools that he and his family were capable of knapping and hafting for themselves. Probably most of his time that was not devoted to hunting was occupied by the laborious business of tool-making, though we know that, even at this early stage, time could be found for the fashioning of such beautiful things as pictures on cave walls and the beginnings of jewelry.

In proportion as property accumulates and civilization develops, the demands of war upon the community become definite and expansive. Men no longer arm themselves with whatever comes to hand, and fight like a swarm of angry bees—war becomes an ever more specialized activity, not to be performed without forethoughtful preparation and a substantial backing of wealth. Just as most civilized communities have, in the past, seen fit to put aside a certain definite amount of their resources for the service of their acknowledged gods, so all communities have contributed their quota of wealth and manhood to the service of Mars, whether they acknowledged him or not.

In a modern community, there are means of estimating part of this quota in statistical form. Of the dire weight of taxation that is accounted for by an English post-war Budget, more than half will be found to be devoted to the direct preparation for war, or the service and liquidation of a debt with which those who have made war in the past have saddled an indefinite number of generations. Such exactness is, of course, deceptive, for not all that Mars takes out of a community is to be estimated in cash values. Who shall compute what Britain lost in losing the flower of her youth? How reckon the loss to the community in the physical under-nourishment of its children during the time of the submarine blockade, or the far more serious blunting

of spiritual perceptions, and lowering of spiritual values during four years of cultivated hate and glorified homicide? But statistics of pounds sterling are at least enough to show that you cannot receive Mars—whether as a cruel necessity or a glorious luxury—into your social system, without paying for him to the uttermost farthing.

Here then are the statistics of British martial expenditure for 1927-8, as they appear in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*:

National Debt Services:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Interest, etc. | £305,000,000 |
| Sinking Fund | 65,000,000 |
| Army Votes | 41,565,000 |
| Navy Votes | 58,000,000 |
| Air Votes | 15,550,000 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total | £485,115,000 |

The rest of the total expenditure, that cannot be debited to the account of Mars, amounts to a beggarly £348,275,000, something not very far off a proportion of five to seven of peaceful to warlike expenditure. In modern, civilized Britain, then, we find that out of every shilling raised for the benefit of the State, fivepence is allotted to the peaceful service of mankind, and the remaining sevenpence to its organized destruction.

Statistics of this kind cannot be quoted for the civilizations of the past, but it is possible to form some general idea of the proportion of a community's energies that were absorbed by the service of Mars.

Man, we know, is a tool-using animal, and so important an activity as war is not to be performed without a specialized and ultimately expensive equipment. Even in the Old Stone Age, the English language would have been out of date in making the warrior fight with his arms alone. The cave man was a man not of arms but of tools, and the tools he took to the fight were those which served him in his warfare against the beast. Even if our guess be right that the fall of that first civilization of the painted cave walls was due to the invention of a superior weapon, the bow, those primitive bows and arrows would almost certainly have been used for hunting first and man-slaying afterwards. If

there had been no war at all, the axes and arrows would have been turned out in about the same quantities by their prospective owners.

When we emerge into the light of history, the mastery of Man over Beast has been established for all time, and hunting has become the sport of Kings, "the image of war," as the immortal Jorrocks puts it, "with only twenty-five per cent of its danger."

Man's equipment for his struggle with Man has become much more elaborate than his hunting kit, and its preparation demanded a proportionately greater expenditure of time and resources. The primitive hunter had been content to arm himself for attack, but he did not, as far as we know, provide his person with any sort of defensive armour. But Man, unlike Beast, was an opponent capable of a sustained and concentrated offensive, and in consequence armour came to be as necessary as, and even more elaborate than, arms.

But Man, being Man, cannot resign himself, even in his fighting, to commonsense practicality. Not only his combative and protective instincts, but his imagination, have got to be satisfied. It is not enough for a sword to bite or a shield to guard; they must have a beauty, a sanctity of their own, no matter how much unprofitable wealth and labour have to be lavished on their enrichment. The more warlike a people is, the more does its creative genius occupy itself with the means of war. Seen through the mist of legend, these things come alive and are endowed with mystic potency.

The form of knife, whose edge is for the cutting of human flesh, soon acquired so great a symbolic value that even to-day, when the thing has become a useless encumbrance in the field, it must needs be attached to the persons of officers as a means of enhancing their dignity, and the veriest money-bug needs the touch of sword on shoulder to change his "Mister" to "Sir." So great is the power of tradition, that the very word "sword" still acts as a stimulus, upon a certain type of mind.

"Paradise," the prophet of Islam said, "is under the shadow of swords," and one of the greatest of the early Mohammedan conquerors was dignified by the title, "Sword of God." The sword figures equally prominently in Christian tradition, the rivalry of Pope and Emperor being typified under the figure of

the spiritual and temporal swords. Leaving the tradition of Roland's Durendal and Arthur's Excalibur, we pass back into the forest twilight of Nordic paganism, and find Sigurd Fafnir's Bane hammering together the pieces of the sword Gram. With the cult of the sword is associated that of the smith and his craft. On the Berkshire downs, the remains of a long barrow have been made to do duty for the cave of Weland Smith, the grand, primæval smith of Nordic legend, who, like Vulcan, the smith-god of classical mythology, was lame.

Nor is it only among peoples of Aryan and Semitic stock that the sword is a thing of beauty and honour. Among the Japanese, we have the same cult, in an intensified form. The Japanese aristocrat had two lavishly adorned swords of razor-like keenness, one for injuring other people and one for ripping up his own belly, this agonising and filthy operation being described, in the language of honour, as the Happy Despatch. Among the finest of Japanese pictures is Kano Motonobu's, of the sage Shoriken crossing the sea on a sword. The contrast between the warlike Japanese and peaceful Chinese temperaments will be realized if we pass from this embodiment of tempestuous energy to a Chinese picture of a sage gliding across a river on a reed, by the impelling power of a contemplation as unruffled as the water.

The bow is not a weapon that lends itself to elaborate adornment, but it has a cult of its own. Of the many bows of legend, none can compete with that of the Indian hero, Rama, who, having to get an army of "hundreds of thousands of millions" of men and monkeys across from India to Ceylon, solved the problem of transportation by the simple expedient of shooting arrows so thick and fast that all could go over. Grecian legend tells of the bow of Odysseus, which, after all others had failed to wield it, answered to his touch with a note like a swallow. The Greek sun-god is an archer; the Hebrew Jehovah sets his bow on the clouds; the most ancient collection of Hebrew war songs is entitled *The Book of the Bow*. As for the Persians, the two cornerstones of their educational system were proficiency with the bow and reverence for the truth.

But arms, by their very nature, do not lend themselves to the same elaboration of adornment as armour, with its more ample surfaces. In days when war was less a collision of disciplined

armies than an affair of individual combats between the chieftains on either side, armour was not only a means of defence, but an expression of individuality. It became part of the man, in almost as true a sense as we may say that the crab's armour is part of the animal. It was something more, for in days when metals were precious and their forging a work of creative art, a chieftain would carry no small part of his wealth upon his person. In the wars of Homeric Greece, it was not enough to slay your enemy—the victory was only complete if he could be stripped of his armour. So in medieval Europe, even the mimic warfare of the tournament involved the transfer of the vanquished knight's armour, and in fact there were champions who contrived to make a good thing for themselves out of the practice of armour collecting, which seems to have been carried on in as business-like a spirit as that of modern professional boxing.

As long as individuals or families retained a certain measure of independence, so long did the armour and trappings of a warrior distinguish its wearer from his fellows. Achilles is practically an independent chieftain, fighting and abstaining when the mood takes him, and accordingly, when he does at last decide to take the field, Homer must needs devote nearly half a book to describing the wonderful armour wrought for him by Hephaestus, at the request of his mother, Thetis. A Celtic chieftain, of the Bronze Age, would not be parted from his armour even in the grave. In the Middle Ages, the science of heraldry grew up round this aristocratic individualism.

As our language quite correctly indicates, weapons may be regarded in the light of arms. Man, the tool-using animal, finds it more expedient to make a sword than to sprout claws like a tiger. There is another kind of military equipment to which the name "legs" might equally appropriately have been applied. The advantages of animal transport must have been apparent from the time that cattle first bore the yoke, but the ox is too cumbrous to be of use for offensive purposes, except when he has been stampeded at the enemy, as he was on one critical occasion by Hannibal, and by the Boers during the last stages of their struggle with the British. But the earliest dawn of Mesopotamian civilization saw the use of chariots drawn by asses, and the ass was the precursor of the horse, whose speed and prowess so greatly

impressed the poetic imagination of his earliest masters. The elephant has also been pressed into the service, but he has not the martial instincts of the horse, and his liability to panic is apt to make him more dangerous to his own side than to the enemy.* As for the camel, his usefulness has naturally been limited to the warfare of his native sands.

One of the earliest forms of capital, fixed in war, is constituted by the fortress. Even before the dawn of history, such immense earthworks as the hill forts of Camelot in Somerset, and Maiden Castle in Dorset, some of which display an astonishing skill in engineering, must have conferred a decisive advantage on the chieftains or communities possessing them. Sometimes a whole territory has been converted into a fortress by wall or dyke, as the Grim's Dykes and Wansdyke of England remain to testify. The culmination of this practice is in the Great Wall which protected Chinese civilization from Mongol savagery, and the lines of circumvallation by which Hadrian and other Emperors sought to protect the civilized world, as they knew it, from the wave on wave of outer barbarism that threatened to submerge it. The labour power withdrawn from works of use or beauty to this heroic form of insurance must have been on a scale to defy computation.

Smaller communities, cities and villages, have found less difficulty in walling themselves in against aggression. In the part of India once under the sway, or scourge, of the Mahrattas, the great mud walls by which every village is converted into a fortress testify to the state of terror that must have diverted so much labour from tilling the soil to the necessary task of safeguarding its fruits and tillers. In the days of more or less independent city states, to speak of a town was to speak of a walled town. One of the few exceptions to this rule occurs in the great prehistoric religious centre of Avebury, where the stone monoliths are enclosed by a mound with the ditch inexplicably on the inside, or wrong side, for purposes of defence. What awful terrors must have invested the stones to inspire this gesture of magnificent unpracticality we can only conjecture.

The amount of labour put into fortification is not limited by utilitarian necessity. The fortress, like armour, has to satisfy

* But elephants were used with decisive effect at Ipsus in 301 B.C.

the imagination and becomes the means of expressing individual or civic personality. The Lord goeth about the walls of Zion, and these walls must be proportionately beautiful, so that the most passionate of love poets can liken his lady's nose to the Tower of Lebanon that looketh towards Damascus. In other communities, walls have been consecrated by that ghastliest of all forms of human sacrifice that consists of walling up living human beings. Among the most exquisite works of architectural genius, whose lavish adornment has been wrung from the toil of millions, are the Indian palace forts of Agra, Delhi and Fatehpur Sikri.

Individuality of fortification culminates in the feudal castle, in which the king or baron strives to impress the splendour of his personality on the world. On the Rhine, with its crown of castles, it is evident that the owners must have built against each other, in the same spirit as rival beauties flaunt their jewels. The castle of Archbishop Kuno von Falkenstein above St. Goar derives its nickname of the "Mouse" from the Counts of Katzelbogen, whose "Cat" towers a little further up the river. The castles of the fourteenth century, virtually impregnable before the advent of artillery, were as fantastically beautiful, with their machicolated towers and banners flaunting in the breeze, as any romance of chivalry. It is only when the State absorbs the individual and warfare becomes mechanised, that the fortress becomes first unsightly and finally as inconspicuous as camouflage can make it.

There is not only the stationary, but the moving fortress, a term that might be applied to every ship of war, and, somewhat doubtfully, to the elephant and chariot. The gun-mounting wagons of John Ziska and his Bohemian iron-sides of the Hussite faith, constituted, both singly, and when laagered together, fortresses of the most formidable description, and that ingenious Scots mathematician, the discoverer of logarithms, John Napier, also turned his inventive skill to devising a metal fort on wheels, which would, if any military authority had had the sense to adopt it, have anticipated the tank by more than three centuries.

The challenge of the fortress is answered by the siege train, which, even before cannon were invented, might consist of the most elaborate and costly devices. Even now we do not know by what means the Romans obtained the extraordinary elasticity of their siege catapults. In medieval warfare, wooden towers

were filled with stormers and pushed against the wall of the threatened castle. It has even been conjectured that the wooden horse of Troy may have been some device of this nature.

The theme might be elaborated indefinitely. Enough, however, has been said to show that, even before its transformation by explosives and the use of mechanical power, war was no longer the human herd's instinctive reaction of hostility against its environment, but demanded, for its successful prosecution, an accumulation of plant, or material, beyond the power of any individual to provide for himself. An ever-increasing amount of labour must be diverted, in time of peace, from fruitful industry, to the organized preparation for war. More and more, as time went on, was war becoming capitalized.

That it was considered possible, as early as the tenth century, B.C., to establish a permanent military superiority by depriving the enemy of the means of accumulating war material, is shown by the simple expedient of the Philistines, who forbade the Israelites the employment of smiths, and established a Philistine monopoly of this industry, even for agricultural purposes. The victorious Spartans, by way of rendering the Athenians helpless, levelled the long walls that made it possible to victual the city from the sea against a Spartan land blockade, and forbade—unsuccessfully as it proved—their reconstruction. The Romans did succeed in ending the Carthaginian menace when they simultaneously deprived Carthage of her fleet, cut her off from her territory and recruiting areas, and crippled her by an indemnity.

A significant modification is thus gradually introduced into the struggle for survival. When, under primitive conditions, such a struggle did take place, it might be expected that as a rule the best man, or best beast, would win. When a couple of lions or bulls fight for the same mate, the female is fairly safe in accepting the winner as the likeliest protector and father for her offspring. When men settled their differences with the clubs that they themselves had torn from trees or the axes that they themselves had chipped, there was some reason for believing that victory was a proof of superior manhood. But even in primitive times it would have been unsafe to say that the dwarfish Azilian, crouching behind a rock and planting his arrow in the back of one of the last survivors of the tall and deep-browed

Cromagnon race, was a better man than his victim, in any intelligible sense of the word "good." Still less would it be safe to deduce that the Germans who launched the first gas attack at Ypres, or the British who, with their overwhelming superiority in weight and range of metal, sank Von Spee's squadron off the Falkland Islands, were, man to man, better than their opponents.

As civilization develops, the old *virtus*, or manly valour, though still a factor of success in war, ceases to be the sole factor, and may, in time, cease to be the decisive factor. More and more is victory the reward of the side which is best equipped with what have significantly come to be known as the Sinews of War.

Nowadays, when we use this term, we generally mean money, because money, visible as coin or invisible as credit, is only the abstract and symbol of power over capital, and not capital itself. To get a little deeper into the heart of the matter, money is the measure of its possessor's right to the fruits of labour and abstinence, past, present, and to come.

It is only gradually that the sinews of war came to be reducible to terms of money. We can mark the transition in Feudal Europe. There the two main features of feudalism, the castle and its striking force of mailed horsemen, were called into being as the only possible reply to the swift and sudden Viking raids, with which the cumbrous process of summoning a national levy was inadequate to deal. The local lord was the only person capable either of providing a refuge for the fleeing populace, or of riding out and bringing the invaders to book. But being less a man of sentiment than of business, he took care to exact full price in the way of service for his protection.

Money played a comparatively small part in the earliest feudalism. Nevertheless, not only did castle, horses and armour form an accumulation of military capital, but the lord was in a sense, a capitalist. He armed and mounted his retainers, and when each retainer died, arms and armour were supposed to be returned to the lord, and could only be redeemed by the heir in return for a fixed payment, or heriot, which survived to modern times.

By feudal theory, the national or royal army would be a levy from such local units, whose lords paid service in lieu of rent for their lands, and who were pledged to arm and maintain a

fixed quota of retainers in the royal service for a fixed number of days in the year. The impracticability of waging efficient war under these conditions is so obvious, that it is no wonder that strong kings, like Henry II of England, saw the advantage of commuting service for scutage, or shield-money, which could be used for the hire of soldiers capable of better service than the undisciplined feudal mob. The army with which Edward III overthrew the feudal host of France was a paid army, even the Black Prince having his price, like any man-at-arms or bowman.

So long as war remained, like other industries, based on the local unit, so long did it afford full scope for the expression of individual personality, at any rate in so far as the leaders were concerned. Chivalry was the blossoming into full power of aristocratic individuality. The feudal army of the late Middle Ages must have been a picturesque sight, with its pennons and coats of arms, its suits of armour—each one a separate masterpiece of craftsmanship—and its gaily distinctive liveries. We can imagine the host that fought before Troy, with its richly armed heroes, to have presented an equally attractive spectacle, while the pictures of Keion, the classical war painter of Japan, testify to the splendour which the Samurai chiefs imparted to their contentions.

It is when the capitalization of war, like that of industry, renders it impossible for the local unit to be any longer self-sufficing, that armies come under the control of a centralized discipline, which aims at standardizing or de-individualizing their members. The uniform thus comes to be the symbol of a mental and spiritual uniformity, highly necessary to those commanders who have to realise their will to conquest through great masses of men, in the same way as the brain expresses itself through the multitudinous body cells.

This process of capitalizing war was greatly accelerated by the invention of gunpowder, and consequently of artillery. The feudal castle, hitherto impregnable against anything short of starvation, was powerless against the impact of cannon balls, as was discovered in the Wars of the Roses, when the Kingmaker Warwick bombarded his way into Bamborough Castle in a few days. It was beyond the capacity of the ordinary feudal magnate to maintain an efficient park of artillery—let alone an arsenal.

Armies of the gunpowder era, horse, foot, and guns, required nothing less than the resources of the State to fit them for survival.

Now that the combatant unit has ceased to be the Estate and become the State, the need for the sinews of war has become ever more insistent. It was the wealth of the Indies that enabled the kings of Spain, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to maintain those consummately trained armies that, until Condé's victory at Rocroi in 1643, had the reputation of being undefeatable. It was the England of William and Mary that discovered the trick of financing war by pledging the resources of posterity to the payment of interest on a National Debt.

During the eighteenth century the influence of international finance, more often than not in the hands of Jews, was exerted with increasing strength on the see-saw of victory and defeat by which some sort of a balance of power was maintained. It would be hard, even nowadays, to determine how much of the spectacular success of Marlborough's armies against the magnificent but almost insolvent Louis XIV was determined by the secret operations of Sir Solomon, or "Jew" Medina. One of the most successful novels of modern times traces the career of Süss, a Jewish financier, in a small German state. It is an undisputable fact that nations thrived in the then linked activities of war and commerce in almost direct proportion to their encouragement of the Jews, the men who could furnish the sinews of war on demand. Much of the success of Wellington in driving the French out of the Peninsula was due to his support by that greatest of all families of international financiers, the Rothschilds. So fluid is capital that, unknown to Napoleon, the Rothschild in Paris was actually co-operating with his brother in London in directing the golden stream to the enemy headquarters. It was British capital, more than British arms, that defeated Napoleon.

One result of the Industrial Revolution and the mechanization of modern life has been continuously to increase the dependence of the soldier on the capitalist. The old idea of war as a man to man struggle in which the best man wins is now hopelessly out of date. In the days of Frederick and Napoleon, the most stubborn troops in all Europe, with the possible exception of the English, were the Russian peasants who brought Frederick to the

verge of ruin, and who, at Borodino, so crippled the French army that, as Tolstoy put it, it could only crawl forward to Moscow like a mortally wounded animal. In the Great War, however, it was demonstrated how helpless was Russian valour, stubbornness, and superiority of numbers, against the superior capitalization of the German armies. It was in vain that the poor conscripts, many of them without rifles, stood passively in their trenches while these were being flattened out by Mackensen's artillery. There comes a breaking point even to the most heroic stubbornness, and such slaughter—running into millions—as the Russians endured, will, sooner or later, reduce the survivors of the bravest army to a mob of panic-stricken cowards, murdering their officers, cutting the traces of the guns and riding away on the horses—anything to escape from such a Hell.

The importance of individual valour declines, under the conditions of modern war, with every increase of capitalization. Such qualities as may be supposed to make the hero are more likely to be decisive in the make-believe of games than in the reality of war. It is the essence of a game that man is pitted against man and team against team under conditions of perfect equality. A rich football club, though it may buy its players in the market like slaves, is not allowed to bring them on to the field in overwhelming numbers, or armed with mechanical devices for getting the ball between the posts. In a boxing contest, man fights with man under rules carefully calculated to secure the victory of the better man. But the whole art of modern war is to fortify the man, or men, with such a backing of capital and machinery as to deliver the hero into the hands of the coward, and to enable one's own side to effect the mechanical slaughter of generally unseen opponents, under conditions of the greatest possible safety to the operators.

The soldier of the future is not to be thought of as a hero, scarcely even as an individual, but as an insignificant part of an enormous machine. He will, unless he happens to march in the ranks of those unfortunate infantry who are destined for the preliminary holocaust on the altar of military tradition, be transported by machinery to the machine from the inside of which he will assist in operating some other machine. There will be no particular inducement to heroism, for he will probably be safer

and better off where he is, than his womenfolk and dependents, exposed to all the horrors of bombardment, poison and starvation. Nor will there be much temptation to cowardice, when there is no even apparent advantage in running away, nor anywhere to run away to. There is nothing heroic about the reduction of mechanical parts to scrap-iron. It is only when men have forfeited their human birthright that the machines will ride their creators and themselves to death.

One effect of the capitalization of war is the overwhelming advantage conferred upon peoples civilized enough to take advantage of it over those who stick fast in the more primitive conditions. Until the advent of gunpowder it was never quite certain whether the untamed valour and martial proficiency of barbarian hordes might not make them more than a match for all the forces of civilization. It was in mobility that the wild riders of plain and desert most often had a winning advantage. The disciplined legions, who made the Mediterranean Hinterland for centuries a closed sanctuary of peace, never found the correct reply to the Parthian tactics of shooting from the saddle and refusing to close, and it was the Gothic cavalry that destroyed the imperial main army at Adrianople. It was a losing fight that civilized Byzantium was compelled to wage against Allah-drunken hordes out of the Arabian desert. And as late as the thirteenth century, all the resources of Christian chivalry seemed powerless to prevent the Tartar hordes from blazing their trail of massacre and destruction to the heart of Europe.

With the dawn of the modern age, the menace of the horde ceased for a time to be formidable. What could valour, what could horsemanship, avail against the rolling volleys and annihilating cannonade of armies, to whose support the machinery of finance enabled the national resources to be applied and the credit of posterity to be pledged? It was not long before the capitalized nations began to exploit their ever-increasing advantage over less progressive peoples. Even Russia, though far behind her Western neighbours, proved strong enough to turn the tables on her Tartar conquerors by bringing the Mongol homelands of Northern and Central Asia under the despotism of her Tsars. The ancient civilization of India fell to the sway of an English company originally formed for exploiting the East Indian trade.

As for China, whose art and culture were by no means demonstrably inferior to that of Europe, her resources could be more conveniently tapped without the formality of annexation. Africa, which in the eighteenth century had been looked on principally in the light of a happy hunting ground for slave traders, was in the nineteenth partitioned among the capitalized powers, without much difficulty except that of averting war among themselves. In the West, it had been little more than police work to clear the boundless prairies of their redskins.

It was only in the opening years of the twentieth century that the quaintest and most picturesque of all the peoples of the East presented the world with a demonstration of how it was possible for a yellow and economically backward race to take a leaf out of the capitalist war-book, and better the instruction. Through all the bazaars of the East the news ran—the white man was not invincible; he could be conquered with his own weapons. And the menace of the horde, long dead, began to revive—more ominously when Russia, so long the bulwark of the West, stripped off her European veneer, and openly proclaimed her will to destroy capitalist civilization. Her method, if she could ever apply it, was to be more efficiently capitalized than the capitalists, to annihilate more ruthlessly the individual in the machine. And behind Russia stands the East, slowly awakening, uncertain as yet of its purpose, while in the West:

“The nations, far away,
Are watching with eager eyes:
They talk together and say,
‘To-morrow, perhaps to-day,
Enceladus may arise.’”

CHAPTER X

STRAINS AND STRESSES

IN the latter half of the nineteenth century was born a new science, christened by the unlovely but impressive name of Sociology. In spite of its now mature age, the shelves of academic treatises that enshrine its mysteries, and the numerous professorial chairs dedicated to its cult, this science has proved singularly barren. It is not so much that it can boast of no agreed body of doctrine and no laws, except such as each individual exponent may formulate for his own academic convenience, but that it has wholly failed to influence life. Never was there an age when civilized man thought less scientifically than he does to-day about social problems. The crudest fallacies pass current in the press and on political platforms, and by these the policy of nations and perhaps the fate of civilized man are determined.

The crudest of all may be described as the fallacy of bigness. It is assumed, rather than explicitly stated, that nations thrive in direct proportion to the amount of territory and population over which their flag waves. No Polish statesman, in the years following the Great War, would any more have thought of doubting that it was a good thing for his country to seize as wide an area of non-Polish territory as she could grab, than a footballer would have questioned the value to his side of goals. Similarly, it never occurs to the young German patriots who talk of reconquering the whole of Germany's Eastern possessions, whether this may not be as if a patient, who had been successfully tapped for the dropsy, should harbour ambitions of swelling back to his previous size.

The history of war has been largely that of sovereigns and peoples afflicted with this urge for collecting territory and subjects, regardless of every other consideration. We have England trying to conquer France, France trying to seize on any available part of Germany or Italy, three European powers partitioning

Poland, and so on with little variation back to the dawn of history, with Egypt reaching out to the Euphrates, and Mesopotamian empires swelling and bursting like bubbles. The assumption has always been that size is strength and sovereignty welfare. That assumption has again and again been proved false in the event; size has been quite as often a source of weakness as of strength. But so strongly have men's passions committed them to seeking the satisfaction that comes from any visible increase of power or possessions, that they have not borne to reason on the subject or to bring their ambitions to the test of experience.

It is not in this spirit that similar problems have been faced in other departments of science than that of society. The engineer has to deal with something very similar when he calculates the strains and stresses that any given structure is capable of standing. If he is building a bridge, he knows that he cannot enlarge the span of his arches indefinitely—how far it is safe to do so is a matter of the nicest calculation. A similar task confronts the architect. However ardently he may dream of heaven-aspiring lines and cliff-like vistas, he must heed the unspoken command of his materials, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." The citizens of medieval Beauvais, in their pride, commanded the building of a cathedral that should soar to even more astonishing heights than that of the neighbouring Amiens. The choir, fourteen feet higher than its rival's, was first completed, and the vault collapsed in less than that number of years. In the sixteenth century there was at last added to the frail and patched-up choir a spire which was believed by its architect to have humbled the dome of St. Peter's. "Five years," says Mr. Ernest Short,* "passed and Jean Vast's spire fell, as the choir vault had fallen 300 years earlier . . . the forces of gravitation triumphed as they must when human effort pits itself against the eternal limitations of human life." It reads like a translation into stone of the life of Napoleon.

When we come to biology, we shall find that the scales are by no means weighted in favour of bigness. Like the span of a bridge, the size of a bodily framework cannot be increased in the same proportion as the strains that it has to bear. It follows that the bigger an animal, the greater the proportion of its energy

* *The House of God*, p. 207.

that has to be put into the task of support and locomotion. We see the fulfilling of this law in the experience of everyday life. No one who has watched boxing can have failed to observe how much more active is the average light-weight than the average heavy. In all walks of life, it is the little men who have the greater fund of superfluous energy—the very word “ponderous” carries a psychological implication.

It is not by the biggest creatures that the torch of life has been passed from mud to Man. The lizards of the mesozoic age died and left no descendants. It would seem as if their colossal bulk had exhausted their possibilities of adaptation. The ancestors of the mammals were insignificant creatures, who were no doubt only too glad to scuttle out of the way of these enormous lords of creation. The giants of the animal and plant kingdom have their day, but they have no future.

Among men, medical research has established that abnormal size is a disease. It is one of the endocrine glands, the pituitary, whose secretions regulate growth, and it is only when this gland ceases to function normally that growth becomes abnormal. Frederick William I of Prussia, when his agents and crimps ransacked Europe to collect a regiment of giants, was merely going out of his way to recruit his ranks with bodily and—more often than not—mental deformities.

Frederick William's son, that disillusioned realist Frederick the Great, lost no time in sending the giants packing, and the experiment has ever since been regarded as a symptom of an abnormal mentality. But when it comes to the body politic, popular thought to-day is not a whit more advanced than that of Frederick William, and its gist is tersely expressed in the words of another sovereign, Victoria, referring to Heligoland: “Giving up what one has is always a bad thing,” to which might be added, “Getting what one has not had is always a good thing.” Nations are supposed to “have” all the land and people that fall within the limit of their sovereignty, and the more one “has” the better.

It is a matter in which passions are too strongly engaged to allow the reasoning faculty free play. One result of recent psychology has been to show the dominating part of the twin desires for power and accumulation among human motives. There is

nothing that confers such a sense of power as the consciousness of sovereignty. The sovereign, if he is a man, will think of himself as actually possessing the land or people of his realm, and the most awful crime imaginable to him will be that of treason. But this consciousness of sovereignty can also diffuse itself among a whole people. To the average Hungarian, the thought of having ceased to rule over Rumanians and Jugo-Slavs acts as a perpetual irritant, and there are few Englishmen who would not prefer having their furniture sold up over their heads to "losing" India. Folk thus emotionally biased are not prepared to think calmly or scientifically on questions of sovereignty. They cling to subjects and territory with the unreasoning passion of a miser for his gold; only they differ from the miser in dignifying their acquisitive fever by the name of honour.

And yet there is no subject on which the need for calm and scientific thinking is more urgent, than on this of the strains and stresses that any social system is capable of supporting, and how far the pursuit of power is calculated to promote the supreme end of civilized life, that of living well.

But the problem is not one to be solved by any easy generalization. The dwarf is as much a product of diseased glands as the giant, and there is a rate of growth, for men and nations, that is healthy and normal. It is more important to determine this rate for nations than for men, because, however it may be with the body individual, it is possible by taking arms to add cubits to the stature of the body social.

Here is a department of thought in which we, with all our talk of social science, are far from having attained the clarity of the ancient Greeks. It is obvious to Aristotle that there is an ideal magnitude, neither too large nor too small, for states, as there is for animals, vegetables, and the instruments of man. If we say that nations are happy in proportion to their greatness, we must dis-abuse ourselves of the vulgar idea that greatness is to be estimated in figures. It means nothing more or less than a community's fitness to perform whatever is its proper function, just as when we talk of a great doctor we are thinking of his cures and not of his size. The State must be large enough to maintain its independence, but not too large for its supreme purpose of fostering the good life among its citizens. Aristotle was

building on a solid foundation of Greek thought. It had been the ancient practice of cities to relieve themselves of superfluous citizens by allowing them to fare forth, with their families and gods, across the wine-dark sea, to found daughter cities independent of the parent.

Aristotle is a true Greek in being more intent on determining the size of an ideal community, than in studying the mechanics of existing social organisms, with a view to ascertaining what additional strains and burdens they are capable of supporting. It was her recklessness in this regard that brought Athens to her downfall in the long war with Sparta. For many years she had faced that formidable opponent with a fair measure of success. Then some mad impulse drove her to add to her commitments by launching a grand expedition against the Sicilian city of Syracuse, a venture which, even if it had succeeded in its object, would merely have had the effect of combining the other Sicilian cities against the new-comer, and causing a never-ending drain of Athenian blood and treasure. But the means did not prove adequate even to that immediate end, and the greatest army and fleet that had ever left Athens perished miserably. Henceforth, though the war dragged on for nine more years, the balance had turned decisively in favour of Sparta.

But Athens had not always conducted her expansion on these suicidal lines. A more plausible experiment was that of exploiting the prestige gained at Marathon and Salamis by forming a federation of maritime cities, under her leadership, with the ostensible object of resisting Persian aggression. For a time, at least, so far from straining her resources, she enormously increased them. Out of the ruins left by Xerxes:

Athens arose: a city such as vision
Builds from the purple crags and silver towers
Of battlemented cloud.

What Shelley wisely forebore to add, was that this divine work was financed by a cynical misappropriation of trust funds, for Athens, as Treasurer of the League, proceeded to feather her own nest out of its subscriptions. But we are not concerned with the morality of the transaction. For a few decades, at any rate,

Athenian imperialism can point to a handsome surplus of receipts over expenditure.

But if we prolong our view to embrace the span of three generations, there is no longer the same tale to tell. The task of maintaining the Athenian Empire involved a steadily increasing drain of wealth and man-power, that finally brought the whole structure crashing in ruins. If Athens had been wise in her generation, she would have sought to bind the alliance by cords of interest or loyalty, instead of exploiting her allies, while jealously refusing them the privileges of equal citizenship. There was no argument but force for such an arrangement, and force was bound sooner or later to be applied against Athens. It was inevitable that her rival Sparta should step forward, with a sublime gesture of disinterestedness, as the champion of Greek liberties, and though Sparta might be held at bay, there was no serious prospect of conquering her. And so, year after year, Athens went on paying for her empire in blood and treasure, until she doubled her commitments by trying to add a second, Sicilian Empire to the first, and rendered the breaking-point inevitable.

It will be evident that one of the most essential tasks confronting every statesman is that of calculating the amount of strain to which it is safe to subject the social organism. It is a task that has seldom been attempted. So strong is the urge towards collective self-assertion, that every increase of power or territory has been regarded as so obviously desirable an end as to call for no calculation of ways or means. To an intelligence such as that of Napoleon, it went without saying that every new department or dependency added to France was a source of additional strength, and so little did he learn from the collapse of his own empire, that even at Saint Helena he thought the English foreign minister, Lord Castlereagh, mad, because he had neglected the chance of securing Hamburg for England at the Congress of Vienna.

On the other hand, it would be a mistake to speak of all national expansion, and even of all wars, as if these showed invariably a balance of loss over gain. There are instances of profitable expansion, and though the gains resulting from war have been constantly and grossly exaggerated, even in this most unprofitable form of human activity they have not always been

outweighed by the losses. There is one kind of war that can fairly be described as an instrument of peace. It was the claim of Virgil that the result of Rome's innumerable battles and conquests had been to "impose the habit of peace" over the civilized world—and this habit persisted for centuries after his death.

Perhaps the only instance on human record of an expansion in which means were so scientifically adjusted to ends as to produce a consistent balance of advantage, is afforded by the Empire of the Incas in Peru. These potentates stood for an ideal of civilization not dissimilar, in principle, from that of the Utopia-builders of the Renaissance. Life was to be ordered, down to its minutest details, by a system of benevolent state socialism, inspired by a cult of sun-worship. Poverty and want were to be banished from human life; every man was to play his happy and unambitious part in that station of life to which it had pleased the sun-god to call him. It was of the essence of the system that it should be based upon the willing consent of those who experienced its advantages. The elect in heaven do not feel the power of God as a tyranny, and in Peru the Inca was God. In this experiment of founding heaven on earth, we have no record of a Lucifer.

The Peruvian would not, however, have subscribed, without reserve, to Christ's doctrine that the Kingdom of Heaven is within, and not of this world. His Kingdom certainly aspired to be one of the spirit, but it was also of the world, and did not hesitate, where other means failed, to repose on the argument of force. But force was only applied in the last resort, and with calculated economy.

The Inca Empire was an island of civilization in the sea of South American barbarism. But it was its policy, from generation to generation, to extend the blessings of this civilization over an ever-widening area, whose limits should ultimately include the whole Continent, which, to a Peruvian, practically amounted to saying the whole world, for before the advent of sea-power the only link with the rest of humanity was by the narrow and easily blocked Isthmus of Panama. Not only were the Incas convinced in their heart of hearts that it was for their good that less favoured peoples were to be drawn within their pale, but they spared no pains to convince these prospective sub-

jects of the fact. Before force was applied, missionary propaganda was allowed to do its work. Consistently with its object, which was the complete surrender of the enemy to the superior civilization, war was to be accompanied with the least possible amount of slaughter and destruction. Once it was over, the soldier gave way to the priest and the schoolmaster. Every effort was made to secure the loyalty of the new subjects to the new order of things. These efforts were seldom long in being crowned with success. Only in very intractable cases was the Assyrian method employed of shifting whole populations. But even here, kindness was the prevailing spirit, and the new home was carefully selected with a view to making the least possible break in the habits of the people.

The most notable feature of this Peruvian expansion was the scientific way in which its rate and extent were regulated by consideration of the resources available. These resources were marvellously organized; the Peruvian roads—despite the limitations imposed by the use of the llama for transport—being more remarkable engineering feats even than those of Rome, and supporting a system of communications which permitted the whole force of the empire to be concentrated with wonderful rapidity at any threatened point. But even so, no Inca ever dreamed of becoming an Alexander or a Napoleon. The process of expansion went on from reign to reign at the same unhurrying pace, time being allowed for each new conquest to be thoroughly assimilated before the next advance was attempted. There is not the least doubt that had South America been left to itself, the process would in time have attained its logical conclusion, and the whole continent would have fallen under the Inca sway; war, like poverty, would have become a thing of the past. Except, perhaps, for the garrison of the Isthmus, the soldier's profession would have become extinct and the Sun-God's Utopia have been established for an indefinite number of generations.

This was not to be. A handful of desperados from overseas, wielding weapons such as the Peruvians had never dreamed of, mounted on animals that they took for supernatural monsters, and employing all the arts of finished treachery, brought the edifice of South American civilization tumbling in ruins. Spanish methods of spreading Christian civilization were strangely dif-

ferent from those by which the Incas had sought to widen the limits of their Utopia. The Kingdom of Heaven became the Kingdom of Hell, peopled by wretched slaves who toiled and starved underground to fill the coffers of pitiless taskmasters. All the wealth and beauty of that Eldorado were destroyed or trampled underfoot. The great roads fell into decay—and all to produce a stream of precious metals that poisoned the economic life of Spain and eventually proved her ruin.

The most illuminating story of expansion is that of Rome. For the first five centuries of her existence, her development was as gradual and—if we may apply the word to what was almost entirely the result of intuition—as scientific as that of the Inca power. So long as the city on the Tiber confined her ambitions to imposing the habit of peace over the limited but formidable area of the Italian Peninsula, it is impossible to speak too highly of her statesmanship, her moderation, and her fine appreciation of what was possible and timely. Only a people so reasonable as to be able to work a constitution whose liberal interpretation would have resulted in a perpetual deadlock, could have accomplished such a feat. It must be remembered that the war, that kept the temple of Janus constantly open, was in such a primitive stage of development that it may be regarded as a normal function of the body politic. For the farmers of the Campagna, it was part of an annual routine to exchange their sickles and pruning hooks for the tools of war, and to fall into their accustomed places in the ranks. The battle itself was a routine, the army rolling forward on the enemy in a rigidly prescribed formation, with scarcely any attempt to manoeuvre, a method that proved ruinous against an enemy who, like Hannibal, would not fight according to the rules.

The Roman Empire in Italy was not, like that of the Incas, an attempt to create an Utopia. To the matter-of-fact Roman, such an attempt would have seemed nonsensical and probably impious. The early Roman did not specialize in ideals, and seldom aspired to see beyond the next practical step. But if he was practical, it was in that best sense of the word in which practicality may have some of the effects of genius. He was no amateur of glory, like the Frenchman, nor was he bitten with the Prussian passion for collecting territory—if he went forward

it was generally because he had to, or, at any rate, because it seemed safer and cheaper to advance than to stand still. Unlike the Athenian, he spared no pains to secure the good-will as well as the support of his some-time rivals, and now federated allies. Certainly with the Latin cities, though not so completely with the Greek, he was successful in demonstrating that loyalty to Rome was the best policy, and a fair return for services rendered.

It must be remembered, in any estimation of the strains and stresses incident to a forward policy, that these are neutralized in direct proportion to the good-will of the peoples affected. Thus, for England, the Union with Scotland has proved an asset of priceless value, while that with Ireland may be written down as a disastrous liability. So again with Prussia, her seizure of a Silesia not unwilling to be seized proved a source of strength, while her attempt to reconcile Poles and Alsatians, with the jack-boot, to the blessings of her sway, played no small part in causing the downfall of 1918.

We must thus give Rome the credit not only for refusing to let her commitments out-run her resources, but also for reducing the calls on these resources by a calculated beneficence of policy. She did not offer Utopia, but she did set up a reign of law which some people might hold to have been a more lasting gain to mankind than any attainable Utopia. In their plodding commonsense way, her *prætors* contrived to strike a common measure of the various divinely sanctioned legal systems of the nations with whom Rome did business, and thus made the first thorough-going attempt to order human relations in the light of human reason.

By the middle of the third century B.C. the task of uniting Italy under Roman auspices was on its way to completion, and no doubt the Senate and people of the Republic might have been content to maintain and consolidate their reign of law over the whole Peninsula without seeking further expansion. But the case of Italy was not that of South America. The sea constituted no impassable barrier against the outer world, and her conquest could not be rounded off without the inclusion of her great granary, Sicily. But the Phoenician power of Carthage had her foot firmly planted in Sicily, and could only be dislodged by force, and it would have wanted a higher order of wisdom than any attainable at the time to have kept the two rivals permanently

from settling their differences by this method. The conflict, once accepted, involved a train of consequences that can be more easily followed in the light of the event than they could have been anticipated at the time.

Once Rome had committed herself to the struggle with Carthage, she had entered on a course that could only end in her complete ruin, or in her lordship of the entire Mediterranean Hinterland. For if the city on the Tiber occupied an ideally central position in the Peninsula, she was equally significantly sited for the rôle of Mediterranean metropolis. A contest between two powers so obstinate and so equally matched could only develop into a life and death struggle. But if Carthage were to fall, the balance of Mediterranean power would be finally destroyed, and there would be no city or people capable of putting up a fight against a victorious Rome. Her expansion must go on, from sheer weakness of resistance, to its logical conclusion, with Rome the mistress, not only of Italy, but of the Mediterranean world. For we may regard Rome as the last of the great river valley civilizations, with the difference that the place of the river is here taken by an inland sea. Her task was essentially the same as that of Egypt and Babylon and Assyria, to unite under her rule all the lands naturally united by the great waterway, and to find frontiers for this empire behind which there would be reasonable security for the civilization over which she presided.

Rome had managed to conduct her Italian expansion without over-straining her resources or affecting the continuity of her Republican life. Was it not natural to expect that the tried and developed statecraft of five centuries, joined to the ancient and still unimpaired Roman *virtus*, would have sufficed to make this second expansion as gradual and well-ordered as the first? This might well have been so, had Rome been free to keep her resources as well in hand as during her conquest of Italy. But the struggle for existence with Carthage compelled her to over-tax these resources as she had never done in her wars with Latins and Samnites, Epirots and Gauls. Had the consul Regulus managed to crown his invasion of Africa by the capture of Carthage, it is conceivable that the Republic might have adapted itself gradually to its widening responsibilities, and that there might have

been no civil wars and no autocracy of the Cæsars. Had there been no Hannibal, there might still have been a chance for Republican continuity.

But that commander's amazing invasion of Italy, and his overthrow of three successive Roman main armies, subjected the social system to a strain from which it never really recovered. It is true that the Roman character never shone out more gloriously than in the hour of supreme trial. After the overwhelming disaster of Cannæ, neither senate nor populace evinced the least sign of perturbation. They refused to withdraw a man from their expeditionary force in Spain. When Capua and Tarentum, the two great cities of the South, went to the enemy, Rome quietly starved them out and defied Hannibal to relieve them. She did what Athens, at the height of her power, had ruined herself by attempting—she captured Syracuse. In the hour of final need, she produced a Nero to outwit and a Scipio to outfight Hannibal. By a constancy of faith and valour never surpassed in history, she crowned the long and seemingly hopeless struggle with victory, and what ought to have been, on any reasonable interpretation, a merciful and secure peace.

But history is not a drama of the kind in which even Roman virtue is sure of its reward. The old republic of farmers, which had risen, by its combination of civic piety with peasant shrewdness, to the lordship of Italy, without ever forfeiting its spiritual continuity, had gained the whole Mediterranean world by its victory, but by overtaxing its strength it had forfeited its own soul. The citizen yeomanry of the Campagna was decimated and ruined, and the compact farms, on which consuls and dictators had not disdained to follow the plough, could no longer pay their way against the competition of great estates owned by financiers who turned them from corn to grass, and ran them dirt cheap by slave labour. The heroic military and financial effort that had broken Carthage had also broken the back of the Roman Constitution. The free populace was no longer attached to the soil, but comprised an ever-increasing mob of city loafers, fed by corn from exploited provinces, and killing the time it no longer spent in the field by lounging at spectacles, and finding a Sadistic outlet for its repressed martial instincts. The chairs of those grand old senators who had guided Rome through disaster to victory

were filled by a new race of money-bugs and political bosses, who well understood how to bump off any would-be cleanser of their Augean Stable. The statesmanlike restraint of Roman policy was a thing of the past. Expansion was now a means of glutting the cheap labour market, and subject provinces were bled white by proconsular leeches to whom a term of office was a short cut to millionairedom. Corruption, violence and finally the extermination of opponents became the recognized methods of political warfare. The army changed, by gradual stages, from the citizen militia of Sentinum and Cannæ to a force of hired professionals, ready to follow their provincial leaders against one another or against Rome itself. That the whole effective power of the State should be vested in one of these commanders or imperators was sooner or later bound to come, and after that it was only a question of time when the Republican constitution should cease to be honoured in name as well as in fact, and Rome sink to the status of a provincial city in her own Empire.

We are not arguing that it was necessarily a bad thing in the long run that the old citizen Republic should have broken down and been replaced by something new and alien to its traditions. What we are concerned to show is that in her long and successful effort to conquer Carthage, Rome had so overstrained her own resources and depleted her manhood as to render that breakdown inevitable. The republican virtues and liberties were the price that Hannibal had forced her to pay for his defeat, and Addison, in his pompous way, was voicing a true intuition, when he made the younger Cato thus deplore the triumph of Cæsar:

"Rome is no more!
O liberty! O virtue! O my country!"

The new Rome of the Cæsars, no longer an Italian but a Mediterranean power, had her own problem of social architecture. How far did her resources permit of her expanding her frontiers? Rome was for all practical purposes the centre of a flat world. In every direction her vision was bounded by an apparently limitless Unknown. Except by ocean to West and desert to South, nature had fixed no limits to her expansion. A world empire required a world's end for its frontier.

The further Rome pushed back the confines of her peace from

Justinian's" reign saw him engaged in a reckless attempt to impose his sway on the sister realm of Scotland. The whole available resources of his kingdom had proved just adequate to crushing the little principality of Wales, but Scotland, though he might defeat her armies and occupy her strongholds, was beyond his power to hold permanently against her will, especially when he was committed to holding a corner of France as well, not to speak of Wales herself. The more decisively his prowess as a warrior enabled him to overthrow the armies of Balliol, Wallace and Bruce, the more hopelessly was he committed to attempting the impossible. He died just in time, with bankruptcy staring him in the face, and the loyalty of his nobles strained to breaking point, and the business of conquering Scotland calling to be done all over again. His son, who entered upon this hopeless heritage, has been held up to scorn for letting Scotland slip from his grasp. It was probably the best thing he could have done, and it is doubtful whether even the father, had he tried, could have found means of holding his conquest much longer.

Next we have the long and hopeless attempt of the English monarchy to conquer a part, or the whole, of France. The third Edward was a consummate tactician at the head of an army that, thanks to the long-bow of the Welsh Marches, proved almost invincible against any force that could be induced to attack it in the open. He could win dazzling victories; Kings of Scotland and France were among his captives; at one time the Eastern Lowlands up to Edinburgh, at another the whole of South Western France acknowledged his sway; but he was attempting the impossible, and without losing a battle his armies wasted away. He ended his reign worse off, except for the port of Calais, than when he had started the war, and with the power of the throne seriously weakened by the concessions he had been forced to make to his Parliament in return for the sinews of war.

The attempt of Henry V to conquer France was doomed to even more disastrous failure, because he was more serious than his great-grandfather about pushing his claim to the throne, and was able to take advantage of France being divided against herself to slip into Paris. The fate of the English army, after Henry's death had left his equally able younger brother in supreme command, is an excellent example of the law we have

been considering. The veterans of Agincourt occupied several years in pushing their tactically inferior and feebly led opponents back to the line of the Loire. In so doing they had strained their resources to the extreme limit, and were only able to sit helplessly down before the fortified city of Orléans, without even blockading it. The frail structure of English dominion had been reared to such an impossible height that one vigorous push was enough to bring down the top story, even when that push was applied by the arm of a girl. It was accounted a miracle that Joan of Arc relieved Orléans. It would have been a far greater miracle, and a barren one at that, had it ever fallen.

During the eighteenth century, British arms achieved a victory which, like that of Agincourt, brought disaster in its train, but owing to a miscalculation of a rather more subtle kind. Never had England attained to such a pinnacle of glory as when, under the magnetic leadership of Chatham, she was raised from the depths of despair to the heights of triumph, when her rival France was being driven from Canada, India, and the High Seas, and when bonfires blazed night after night for victories. Chatham was convinced that he had discovered how to make war pay, and accordingly he poured out blood and treasure and pledged the resources of posterity with superb generosity. The peace which raised England to the pinnacle of glory might have been more glorious still, had not the young king, George III, and his favourite, Lord Bute, taken fright and put a stop to Chatham's career of glorious prodigality.

England seemed now in a fair way to acquiring a North American empire as great and profitable as that of Spain in the South. But by removing their ever-present fear of encirclement by France, England had taken from her American colonists their one effective inducement to acknowledge her sway. And now that the victory bonfires were ashes, the prosaic question arose as to who was to foot the bill that Chatham had run up for America's deliverance, and who was to pay for the considerable garrison of redcoats that was still wanted to protect the colonists from the Redskins. Taxes were high in the Mother Country, and it did not sort with English notions of fair play that the colonists should take all and give nothing. As for the Americans, they were practical folk with no enthusiasm for lightening other

people's war debts, however incurred, but with a stern belief in the doctrine of no taxation without representation, which—as they had no intention of being represented for such a purpose—meant that England might whistle for her money. But England, who had to disburse an unprecedented amount to pay her own creditors, did not feel as if she could afford to do this, and made one or two clumsy and half-hearted efforts to induce her colonists to contribute. Sentiment being ruled out on both sides, there was no way of deciding the matter except by force, and the idea that England's resources in men and money could be equal to the task of holding the United States permanently in subjection was so absurd, that one wonders at even George III having harboured it.

Had Chatham been inspired by the spirit of Machiavelli, he might have calculated that the feat of making even a victorious war with France pay its way was beyond his own and his country's capacity. England need not have lost her colonies, had she been able to afford, out of her own pocket, the luxury of consolidating and holding a North American empire. It was when she sent round the hat on account of war that was going to have paid its own way, that the proud structure collapsed. Once again, the building had proved unequal to the strains imposed upon it.

It would be interesting were a history of the world to be written from this generally disregarded standpoint of the adequacy, or otherwise, of each people's resources to the achievement of its ends. We should see how again and again blood and treasures have been poured out to further schemes as feasible as the conquest of the moon. Among these must be classed the attempt of the Hohenstaufen rulers of medieval Germany to play the Cæsar in Italy, the long-drawn futility of the crusading effort to reconquer Palestine for Christianity, the Swedish expansion, under Gustavus Adolphus and his successors, on the opposite shores of the Baltic, the chronic French hankerings after Italian soil. Particular attention would be paid to the political elephan-tiasis with which Napoleon Buonaparte inoculated post-revolutionary France, and not the least important chapter would deal with the Hapsburg conglomeration of peoples, races, and languages, the imminent prospect of whose dissolution was one of the immediate causes of the Great War.

The history of wars and political ambitions would, from this point of view, become a record of almost unbelievable waste and futility. Statesmen would be revealed in the capacity of architects, without the least knowledge of the strains to which they were subjecting their materials, feverishly adding to the height of their buildings and the span of their bridges, and trusting to luck or Providence to keep them from collapsing. There is scarcely the faintest sign of modern statesmanship having even started to grapple with the most elementary of all its problems. Marshal Foch, demanding the Rhine frontier for French security, and M. Poincaré, with his game of beggar-myself-to-beggar-my-neighbour in the Ruhr Basin, were on no higher level of thought than Napoleon, when he made Spain his vassal and exhausted his last reserves of power in the attempt to keep her so. The fatal results, to its perpetrators, of the Polish partition, might have made Rumania hesitate to undertake the dragooning of some million Magyars, and the experience of Austria in Italy might have been some argument against subjecting the South Tyrol to Fascist methods of coercion more thorough-going than anything dreamed of by Metternich or Haynau. These are strains wantonly imposed on the resources of the dominant power, without the slightest compensating advantage.

And yet it never occurs to the architects of modern society that theirs is a skilled craft whose principles will repay study. The cool calculation of strains and resistances has proved less inspiriting, hitherto, than the call of such maudlin sentimentality as:

“Wider still and wider
Shall thy bounds be set;
God who made thee mighty
Make thee mightier yet!”

and accordingly the coffin houses continue to be run up, story by story, until the crash comes.

CHAPTER XI

THE DESTRUCTIVENESS OF WAR

THE conscious mind is an instrument for recording new impressions. If a truth is sufficiently familiar, it ceases to command attention, and there is no avenue by which it can penetrate to the mind. Thus, if we were to say, "The business of the soldier is to destroy, just as that of the doctor is to heal," we should probably find no one to dispute the statement, but neither should we find any one sufficiently impressed to follow it up in thought or action. And if, warming to our theme, we were to accumulate statistics showing the destruction of life and property caused by war, we should find it difficult to keep an audience. After all, what profit is there in crying over the spilt milk of humanity, those

"Old, unhappy, far-off things
And battles long ago"?

And so, with cheerful hearts, we go about the preparation for bigger and bloodier wars than any in the past.

It is only those rare spirits, to whom common things are perpetually new, those seers with the wondering gaze of children, who occasionally startle us into seeing obvious things as they are. Such a one was William Blake, from whom the sight of a uniform elicited the cry,

"The soldier, armed with sword and gun,
Palsied strikes the summer sun,"

which, it is hardly necessary to add, implied no personal animosity against soldiers—Blake's pity for whose all too common fate inspired those equally poignant lines,

"The hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls."

War, in Blake's vision, is the agelong veto on God's fiat, "Let there be light." It is not the destruction of lives, so much as

the effect on life itself with which we, like him, are concerned. Do the facts of history warrant us in regarding the soldier's sword and gun as things essentially evil and hostile to life, or are we, in the calm of reflective judgment, to side with those who regard war as a healthy social purgative?

The last chapter has provided us with a new angle of approach to this problem. History may be viewed as a spectacle of communities continually over-straining their resources in the effort to achieve ends beyond the limits of their strength. Civilization has not advanced by steady progression, as on a road gradually sloping upward, but rather by a series of irregular ascents followed by abrupt and often catastrophic falls. Empires expand and burst, like bubbles on the surface of Time:

“Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, where are they?”

It is this ceaseless alternation that has led some observers, and notably Spengler, to subject civilization itself to the same laws of growth and decay as we see at work in the animal world. Once you have settled—no easy task—what constitutes any particular civilization, you know, more or less, the phases through which it has to pass; you know, too, that decay and death are its inevitable portion, and that our civilization, in particular, has fallen into dotage, and is showing signs of the final break-up.

But analogy is notoriously among the most dangerous of mental pitfalls, and there is no reason for assuming that what holds good for the body individual will have any application to what we may be pleased to call bodies social. Of course, if you impose arbitrary classifications into “Magian,” “Faustian,” and the like, you can make the “civilizations” end where you will, and then prove to your own god-like satisfaction that they were predestined to have ended. But outside the observer's mind, things do not happen in this way. Life knows nothing of Magian and Faustian. The cells of the body social are perpetually being renewed, and the babies of the twentieth century are as fresh and vigorous as those of the tenth. There is nothing in social life analogous to senility. Unless we are to hold that Jehovah has granted a special charter of exemption from His own laws to His chosen people, the one instance of the Jews would suffice to show that there is no limit fixed to the life of a “civilization.” For surely, if we

are not to count as a "civilization" that which is founded on the Law of Moses, and has persisted in spite of age-long dispersion, the word ceases to have any use, even as a convenience.

If, then, we talk of the death of a civilization, what meaning are we to attach to the phrase? For life is never static, and even when institutions remain fixed, the soul informing them is perpetually changing. Time and again has history borne witness to the truth of Tennyson's lines,

"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

But change and death are quite different one from the other, and the passing of the old order need have no more connection with death than that of the old year. Like Arthur, it may pass but not die.

We must distinguish between two things that are often confused. One is the ending of a culture, an event to which it would usually be hard to fix an approximate date, the other—much more definite—the downfall of a state or community. We know, for instance, the dates at which Egypt was included in the Assyrian, and subsequently the Persian empires. But Egyptian civilization? Did it perish with the Pharaohs, or hand on its torch to the Greeks, or revive with the Ptolemies? Are we to regard Greek civilization as an offshoot of Egyptian—a degenerate offshoot as an Egyptian would certainly have claimed—or something quite original and self-made?

In view of these uncertainties, we should be well advised to give up the attempt to divide civilization into a few closed compartments called "civilizations," unless it is our object to find a workable method for forcing the facts of history into the framework of our prejudices. Civilization is not a thing whose nature it is to run into blind alleys. It is certainly capable of being destroyed, but that is nothing to do with its having exhausted its possibilities and sunk into senile decay. It is not that old age has rotted it from within, but that force has been applied to it from without. The brutal fact of the matter is summarized in a couplet written by some one during the siege of Ladysmith:

"But one thing's certain in this land of lies,
If Long Tom hits you on the head, you dies."

A plain instance of this is that of the Inca civilization. This was, to all appearance, never so flourishing as at the time when the trade winds were wafting Pizarro and his gang across the broad Atlantic. After a few hectic years, that civilization was utterly destroyed, because superior force had suddenly, brutally, been applied to it. The same sort of thing had probably happened in South America long before the advent of Man, when the joining up of the Panama Isthmus had first admitted carnivorous animals to the Continent, and they made a fine holocaust of more primitive species which had evolved, hitherto, in insular security.

Here, then, is one plain instance of a civilization that was destroyed, not by its own exhaustion or senility, but by war. The Spanish soldier, armed with sword and gun, had stricken with eternal darkness the Utopia of the Sun-god.

Let us, following the plan of our last chapter, take one more glance at Roman civilization. We saw how, for five centuries, the Roman character had evolved continuously on lines of republican simplicity and civic virtue—as Rome had understood that word. That continuity was broken, not because the *virtus* of the citizen-farmers had in any way degenerated, but because the strain of a glorious and successful war had thinned the personnel and ruined the fortunes of this class to such an extent as to change the republic of burgher-farmers to an autocracy supported by city loafers and professional soldiers. The cosmopolitan civilization of the Empire was not much more Roman, in the old, republican sense, than it was Carthaginian, except for the important fact that Roman law continued to evolve into the system finally codified under Justinian. There is no reason to believe that the old Roman civilization was running to seed at the end of the 3rd century, B.C. It was never more vigorous than when Hannibal crossed the Alps. It was war that dealt it its mortal injury and left the Roman State like a body bereft of its soul.

Again, there was no reason why the new wine of Christianity should not have infused new youth and vigour into the civilization of the Mediterranean world, but for the fact that the Roman State had expanded to such bloated dimensions as to be barely

the old, half-gods. There, amid surroundings the most beautiful that imagination could conceive, the choirs of the new god never ceased to chant the psalms of his royal evangelist.

In this, his city of the soul, Akhenaton laid the cares of state aside. What was a province more or less to him, whose thought embraced the universe? It was not long before the Empire bequeathed by Thothmes began to crumble in ruins. Despairing messages reached the Pharaoh from the commanders of his Syrian garrisons, who must have continually scanned the Southern horizon for the first signs of the relief that never came. No wonder that the army was ripe for mutiny, while the great vested interest of the old priesthood never ceased to intrigue against this heresy that exposed Egypt naked to her enemies. Akhenaton died—just in time. Then the inevitable reaction engulfed his new order; the triumph of the priests put an end to the spiritual life of Egypt; new Pharaohs, who knew not Akhenaton's God, defended the empire so efficiently that the strain reduced it to political as well as spiritual insignificance.

Perhaps the tragedy was not inevitable. It is difficult on any grounds to defend Akhenaton's method of shirking the responsibilities of kingship; and the thought of his loyal servants, left to perish at their distant posts of duty, is far from pleasant. But had his political been equal to his religious genius, it is conceivable that the Pharaoh might have boldly and deliberately withdrawn his garrisons from Syria, retired behind Egypt's old defence of the desert, and then concentrated all his endeavours on the spiritual regeneration of his people. But such things are more easily talked of than put into practice. One can imagine the force of national and probably religious sentiment that would have been brought into play against so monstrous a surrender. It would have been as if an English statesman were to propose to abandon India.

What had it profited the ancient civilization of the Nile that she had found a Thothmes to convert her into a military empire? In the effort to maintain her frontiers she had starved her soul, and not even Akhenaton could restore it to her.

This same story is repeated throughout history. We see this or that civilization rise and bear fruit, and then, when its promise seems even greater than its achievements, the summer sun, in

Blake's phrase, is stricken palsied; the energy on which that civilization has thriven is withdrawn, and even if it is not actually and physically destroyed, it is starved and impoverished.

It must be remembered that every advance of civilization renders it more vulnerable. A piece of delicate mechanism is more easily put out of order than some crude and primitive contrivance. It is a commonplace of biology that the lower the degree of a creature's organization, the harder it is to kill. It is the same with human communities. One of the difficulties encountered by the English troops on the North West Frontier of India is that of inflicting any vital injury on the tribes with which they have to deal. A punitive expedition may burn their huts, but these can quickly be put up again, and as soon as the troops have departed, the fugitives come back from their hiding places and the game of loot is resumed with unabated zest.

But as soon as men begin to settle down in cities and lead a civilized life, the destructive potentialities of war, and even of the preparation for it, are multiplied. The more Man has acquired, both of material and intangible possessions, the more he has to have. And destruction is more easily and quickly accomplished than construction. The city that has taken centuries to build may be sacked in a night. One thrust of a lance or pressure on a trigger may inflict injuries that not all the doctors in the world can cure.

Sometimes the effects of war are as brutal and obvious as those summarized in two famous words of Virgil: "*Troja fuit*—Troy was." There is no dispute as to the effect on German civilization of the Thirty Years' War, which was ostensibly fought to settle the way in which Jesus Christ ought to be worshipped by those followers to whom his last and supreme commandment had been "Love one another." German civilization was, when this war broke out, rich in achievement and big with promise. By the time the soldiers had finished with the country, that civilization was ruined. It is a very moderate estimate that makes those actually exterminated amount to two thirds of the population. In some districts the proportion was far higher. In Bohemia, for instance, the population shrank from four millions to less than one. Lands were everywhere thrown out of cultivation; in many places the Beast resumed his ancient sway. Thriving towns were

ruined, commerce languished, art and literature died, the surviving peasants relapsed into serfdom. It was not before the eighteenth century that German civilization began to show signs of revival.

That is a particularly glaring instance of the injury to civilization caused by war. As regards sheer loss of life, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has caused to be published some interesting statistics. The Seven Years' War, from which Frederick II of Prussia derives what claim he has to greatness, accounted for about a ninth of the population of Prussia, devastated entire regions, left the people without bread or horses to cultivate the soil, and destroyed 13,000 houses so completely that not even the ruins were visible. Of the losses occasioned by the Napoleonic Wars, Frölich, writing only of the period from 1801 to 1815, estimates the total, military and civilian, at not far short of six millions. All these figures are put into the shade by the staggering totals of the four years 1914-1918, where the military losses alone cannot have been far, if at all, below the ten million mark, a figure that would probably have to be doubled if we were to include the whole mortality for which the War was directly or indirectly responsible. As for the losses caused by wars of more remote times, when whole populations were wiped out or sold into slavery, we have not even approximate statistics.

Losses in actual combat have never amounted to more than a fraction of the butcher's bill. Disease has always been the inseparable companion of war, though medical science may reduce the proportion of "died" to "killed" to an extent undreamed of before the twentieth century, and enable many more wounded men to be patched up and driven back into the shambles. But disease is not to be baulked of her due by these expedients. He must be sceptical indeed who can see no causal connection between the War, and the frightful epidemic that swept round the world during its last year, doubling the death roll—an epidemic to which Mr. Bernard Shaw has given its correct name of "war-plague."

Besides, it is one of the recognised objects of civilized belligerents to break the wills of their opponents by depriving them of the means of subsistence, and the successful accomplishment of this aim entails all the effects on the human frame of under-

nourishment and starvation. What was the mortality bill of the successful blockade of the Central Powers by the Allies, and of the German submarine counter-blockade, can only be guessed—it must certainly have been heavy. Nor can we acquit the War of responsibility for the millions of deaths by famine, privation and murder, that have been the sequel to the collapse of the Russian social system under its strain.

Even if we grant to medical science the power of mitigating war's attendant curse of disease, its effects will certainly be outweighed in the future by another factor that was only beginning to come into operation during the last war, and about which we shall have more to say later on. The operations of war are bound to be aimed more and more at the civilian population. It may be that the soldier of the future will be safer in his dug-out than his wife and children in their unprotected home, subjected to all the horrors of fire, explosion, and poison gas. The smoking out of great cities like wasps' nests, and the consequent dissolution of the social order, may put all the horrors of Attila and Tamerlane into the shade.

This, however, is in the future, and it is with the past of war that we are at present concerned. The mere tale of lives sacrificed, even if there were any means of recording it with accuracy, would not suffice to drive home the truth of Blake's intuition as to the effect of the soldier's activities. Our imaginations are mercifully dull and callous. When we read of wars we are like children engaged in the fascinating occupation of playing with toy soldiers. We use the *cliché* "frightful slaughter" with the same sort of faint relish with which we used to watch a row of our little red grenadiers collapse on the table. If we could visualize peaceful folk turned out of their flaming villages to starve in the depths of winter, women at the mercy of blood-drunken soldiers, torture applied for greed of gain or sheer Sadistic enjoyment, men gradually asphyxiated in submarines or stokers boiled in steam and pitched against the furnaces of sinking battleships, all the agony, filth and beastliness of real war, the horror of it would be intolerable. It was no sentimental pacifist, but a hardened and experienced soldier who said that war was Hell. But even in the days when the existence of Hell was unquestioned, it was too hard to imagine—even with the help

of pictures and flaming west windows—for it to have much appreciable effect on daily life.

But even if we agree to avert our eyes from, and close our hearts to, this unimaginable sum of human suffering, and regard the effects of war not on men but on mankind, by what sophism will it be possible to maintain that the organized destruction by Man, not only of his own species, but of all the kindly fruits of his civilization, can fail to breed true to its kind? To say that war acts as an agent of beneficent selection, is to fly in the face of experience and probability. Making its appeal to force against reason, war admits of no survival value for anything pure, honourable, just, or lovely. Mars is a Philistine, who tramples the flowers of civilization recklessly underfoot. To art he is insensitive; to science his attitude has seldom varied from that of the Roman soldier cutting down Archimedes. When he is not actively engaged in his work of blind violence, he fastens on to civilization like a monstrous parasite, draining its life blood. No doubt, in his brutal indifference to anything but destruction, he may uproot weeds with the flowers, and the fire that comes out of the bramble may consume other brambles as well as the cedars of Lebanon. But such accidents are not to be dignified by the name of selection.

To the mockery of talking of war as if in some way it fostered civilization even geography bears witness. As Mr. A. B. Cowan, in his brief, but extremely suggestive essay entitled *War in World History*, pointed out, civilization has not tended, in the past, to thrive in those regions best suited to it by nature. For untold thousands of years the most fertile plains in the world, the pampas, the prairies, the black-earth lands of Russia and Manchuria, remained uncultivated, while far less promising regions, such as the bare slopes of the Andes, the arid plains of Mexico, and the swamps and deserts of Mesopotamia, were forced into cultivation by dint of infinite labour. What conceivable reason can be assigned for this, except the obvious one that the favoured regions were already sparsely peopled by nomads, who in America at least had not even progressed from hunting to herdsmanship, but who, being first-class fighting men, were able to make short work of any tillers of the soil?

Of how far war really tends to promote civilization, the present

state of Mesopotamia bears silent witness. The Garden of Eden has become a wilderness, irreclaimable for centuries, all because the Mongol once passed that way, perfectly organized for war, and stamping out the civilization that he despised beneath his horses' hoofs.

There is an unacknowledged mysticism, rife in our time, that might take its inspiration from Pope's "Whatever is, is right." If war has accompanied Man throughout the whole course of his history, it has got to be fitted into the scheme of evolution, and somehow justified. For minds so constituted, it requires a painful effort to think of a mere destructive activity, always hostile to, and rapidly tending to become incompatible with, civilization. But the simple truth remains, that Man can destroy at a far greater rate than he can construct, and that every step forward in evolution increases his destructive powers at the same time as it renders civilization more vulnerable. As an agent of selection war went out of date with the animal. To conquer by love or by reason is alone worthy of a creature divine in the germ; to conquer by force is to revert to the level of the brute and to the brute's scale of values.

War is nothing more nor less than the veto of Mars upon the primal commandment, "Let there be light." Unless the common-sense of mankind is able to deprive him of that veto, Blake's lines may fall short of the truth. The soldier will no longer, as in the past, strike palsied the summer sun, but end by putting it out altogether.

CHAPTER XII

THE MILITARY PROFESSIONAL

WHEN our ancestors first came down from their trees and took to the use of tools, they had made a discovery the effect of which was to revolutionize evolution. Formerly when a species specialized itself for any function, there was nothing for it but slowly and in the course of untold generations, to breed specialized bodies informed by correspondingly specialized minds. There is a kind of eel that has converted itself into a living and exceedingly complex electric battery. Man has also, in perhaps a longer time than Eel, succeeded in providing himself with electric plant, but he can scrap and renew this at pleasure, whereas Eel has no choice but to go on being a battery of the standardized ancestral type, and to breed other batteries of the same type.

When, therefore, we talk of specialization in Man, we are referring to no such irrevocable change as takes place in Beast. The leopard cannot change his spots nor the eagle his claws, but Man is only too ready, on occasion, to down his tools. But having put them down, he is free to take up others of an improved pattern, to which his mind, with its capacity for foresight and generalization, is capable of adapting itself.

This may explain why Man, who must have started by being a peaceful vegetarian like his cousins the Apes, contrived in so comparatively short a time to outdo the fiercest carnivora in feats of strife and bloodshed, and even to out-dragon "dragons of the prime" by luxuriating in torture and cannibalism. It may also afford ground for a hope that these warlike tendencies may prove to be no ineradicable part of human nature, and that it may be as possible to turn swords into ploughshares as it was to turn hunting-knives into swords.

The most complete example of military specialization in the animal world is afforded by the termites or tropical white ants.*

* See *The Life of the White Ant* by Maurice Maeterlinck.

Here the necessity of defending themselves against their enemies, the true ants, has compelled the termites to breed a class of soldiers, completely armoured, and armed either with enormous jaws or with a missile weapon in the form of a minute syringe, capable of projecting a sticky and disabling fluid. These troops, so formidable to their foes and so necessary to the community, are nevertheless utterly dependent upon the workers they protect, being blind and even incapable of feeding themselves. Among the vertebrates this specialization within the species only takes place between the sexes; the bulls, for instance, are formed to be fighting leaders of the herd. Vertebrate bodies have not the plasticity that enables two such different creatures as the worker and soldier termite to be bred from what, to all microscopic appearance, are precisely similar eggs.

By his invention of tools Man acquired much more than this plasticity. Now that he had no longer to incorporate his means of action with his body, he could cut loose from his ancestral moorings and make himself into any kind of creature that might happen to suit his purpose. The same community might include, not like the ants' nest, two or three, but hundreds of different kinds of specialists.

This new-won freedom had a curious and tragic sequel. The peaceful vegetarian of the trees developed into a carnivorous super-brute capable of outdoing any animal in savagery and destructiveness. Whereas a comparatively small part of animal energy had been spent on warfare within the species, the fiercest energies of Man were concentrated on the destruction of other men. In course of time a new kind of man began to make his appearance, corresponding to the soldier ant, only more formidable and aggressive, a man whose whole object in life was to become as efficient a destroyer as possible of his own species. And it is such men of prey that most civilized communities have delighted to honour above all others.

Once human communities started to arm themselves and turn their arms against one another, a competition in destruction had been set up to which no limits could be fixed. However much one people might want to devote itself to peaceful agriculture or industry, it could not ignore the existence of neighbours who believed that their swords, spears and shaggy shields were a suffi-

cient title to the goods of any "cowards" incapable of vanquishing them in the field.

It is only with the growth of civilization that this competition enters on the cut-throat stage. The savage's adherence to immemorial custom and the authority of his gods or ancestors confines him to some modified extent within the limitations of the animal stage. For though he is not compelled to grow longer teeth and sharper claws on his own body, when he wants to improve his methods of war, he has got to graft the new idea on to the general body of tribal custom. He thinks in grooves, and not the prospect of the most obvious advantages will make it occur to him to alter the rules of the game and specialize for a new kind of war.

The first armies are tribal militias. War is a function of the whole community, or, at any rate, of its adult males. A wandering sheikh, like Abraham, will be ready, on due occasion, to mobilize his tribe for the purpose of repelling a raid or for pursuing his own, or some friendly chief's feud. Each of his shepherds and herdsmen has probably been handy with his weapons from childhood, and such discipline as the chief imposes hardly differs from that of a good pack of hounds.

The most obvious advances to specialization come from division of labour between the sexes, and between master and slave. In an Indian tribe between braves and squaws, and in Lacedæmon between Spartans and Helots, there is a division into those who fight and those who work not dissimilar from that which obtains among the white ants. There is the same tendency of the fighters to become parasites on the workers, so that it becomes a frequent point of military honour to leave civilian labour to inferiors in sex or status. According to Aristotle, no mere mechanic ought to be admitted to citizenship, because, though indispensable to the existence of the State, mechanics are incapable of a life of virtue. Husbandmen are similarly disqualified, owing to their lack of leisure. But a youth spent in arms is, Aristotle thinks, a suitable preparation for a maturity of political office.

It is in the nature of things that a class of human beings specialized for war must be maintained by the rest of the community. A soldier who has to till the soil for his food will be less efficient than one whose whole time is free for the exercise of his

profession. And in war, the stress of competition is such that only the most efficient survive.

We must look for the appearance of the military specialist to comparatively civilized and highly organised communities. It is especially the invention of money that enables the products of labour to be collected by a central authority and applied to any required purpose. The civilized State, with its machinery for collecting taxes, is able to secure that every humble worker, besides providing for himself, shall contribute his quota towards the feeding and capitalization of a standing army.

In the earliest collection of laws known to us, that codified by Hammurabi of Babylon in the twenty-second century before Christ, we find references to a class of specialists who probably acted as officers for the general levy. These gentlemen were furnished each with his own house and plot of land, though provision was made for the owner's absence, presumably on service, for long periods, extending to three years. If, in what is euphemistically known as the "King's misfortune," one of them got taken prisoner, and his resources (excluding his house and land, that were not to be touched) proved insufficient to ransom him, then his local temple was expected to make good the deficiency, and, failing that, the royal treasury. On the other hand, if he attempted to evade service by finding a mercenary as a substitute, the penalty was death—a clause hinting that the professional soldier was even then not unknown.

In Egypt, during the later Empire, we find a regular army of professionals in being. At no time in their history have the Egyptians been a warlike people, and seldom have they held in sentimental honour the profession of arms. But the Pharaohs who reigned after the expulsion of the Hyksos were masters of kingcraft, and well understood how to employ the wealth of the Nile Valley in making good the military deficiencies of its inhabitants. The deliverer of Egypt, Pharaoh Ahmes, formed a long service army during his campaigns in Syria, very different from the happy-go-lucky levies of the Middle Kingdom. It consisted of two parts, one for active service on the Syrian Front and the other home service in the Delta, and doubtless for reinforcements to the other. The soldierly pride of each division was fostered by dedicating it to some god—in his desperate battle at Kadesh,

the command of Rameses II consisted of the divisions Ammon, Re, Ptah, and Sekhet. The manufacturing resources of Egypt were capable of supplying a magnificent force of chariots—it is a plausible conjecture that the disaster of the Red Sea may really have been due to the wheels of the chariots getting bogged in the sands at low tide. The Hyksos had taught the Egyptians the use of the cavalry arm, and fire discipline was developed in what became a formidable corps of archers.

The service was made as attractive as possible to the soldier. He was expected to find his own arms, but he was provided with a little estate of eight acres, and he had valuable privileges, including that of immunity from arrest for debt. He was also encouraged to strive for the honours and decorations that were the reward of distinguished service.

It was with such a force that the young Thothmes III, whose finely chiselled features and rather bird-like physiognomy survive in his granite portrait, marched to the first Armageddon, with which battle the history of war as an art may be said to begin. The enemy, a coalition of Asiatic dynasts under the King of Kadesh, barred his northward road in a strong position along the Carmel Ridge, with its right covered by the fortress of Megiddo. There was a council of war. The Pharaoh proposed to approach the front of the enemy's position through a pass, the same that was afterwards used by Lord Allenby's cavalry when sweeping round to cut the Turkish communications. The generals, already thinking on orthodox military lines, were horrified. To attempt a deployment from a defile, within striking distance of an active enemy, was to court annihilation. But the young sovereign had taken the enemy's measure, or perhaps he trusted to luck and his star. By all his gods he was going to take the risk, and any commander who had not stomach for the business might stop behind if he chose. The gamble came off. The King of Kadesh remained passive on his hills until the last of Pharaoh's columns had debouched into the plain. Thothmes must have realized that the game was now in his hands. By a threat to envelop his enemy's right, he forced him to change ground, and then, having probably created the desired impression of moral superiority, launched an assault that was rapidly and decisively successful. Only the mis-conduct of the Egyptian

troops, whose discipline was not proof against the temptation of loot, prevented the immediate fall of Megiddo and the capture of the hostile generalissimo. As it was, the King of Kadesh got clean away by abandoning his tent and harem, and a regular investment of the fortress was necessary. The victory was glorious enough in all conscience, yet, like other glorious victories, it committed the conquerors to holding what they had won, a task that was ultimately to prove a fatal drain on their resources.

As time went on, the army of the Pharaohs ceased to be Egyptian in anything but name. As early as the Middle Kingdom, foreign mercenaries had been employed, and doubtless the later Pharaohs found that their wealth could be profitably expended in hiring troops of better fighting quality than those of native stock. Under the last of the great Pharaohs, Rameses III, the greater part of the army consisted of mercenaries "and after his reign," Professor Mercer informs us, "these men were so much accustomed to the country that they in turn as foreigners conquered and dominated Egypt." *

In the Assyrian army, the most formidable of the ancient East, there was the same tendency to fill the ranks with mercenaries, a practice that significantly culminated during the glorious reign of Assur-bani-pal, just before the collapse.

In the Hebrew scriptures we see plainly the process by which a professional army might come into being. It was a tribal horde that broke into Palestine under Joshua, and for a long time such military operations as we read of were conducted by improvised levies under any likely leader who might happen to offer himself. Amazingly clever some of these leaders must have been, if we may judge by Gideon, who, with uncanny psychological insight, picked out the small minority of his force whom he observed to be drinking deliberately from a stream out of their cupped hands instead of flinging themselves down and quenching their thirst like animals, and with these few cool hands, brought off, just before dawn, perhaps the most cunningly calculated surprise in military history.

Such leaders might gather round them bands of adventurers and ne'er-do-wells, not very easily distinguishable from brigands, as when Jephthah, "a mighty man of valour," was driven out of

* *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.* Art. "War."

enemy's retreat, he would leave it open—desperate men fight hard. But more important even than manoeuvres in the field is the weakening of the enemy *morale* by means of spies. The really able warrior does not seek the fame that comes from brave deeds; he only fights when he has so sown the seeds of defeat among the enemy that he is certain of winning. Moreover Sun is one of the few commanders who have mastered not only the tactics, but the economics of war. He knows that even victory, if too long delayed, will over-strain a country's strength, and leave it so weakened as to be the victim of rival powers: "there never has been a country that has benefited from a prolonged war." He is therefore an advocate, not only of a quick conclusion, but of living on the enemy's country and resources whenever possible.

Such were the foundations of professional soldiership in a country whose way of life shows little tendency to change in the course of ages. War, to the Chinaman, was a trade which, if not particularly honourable, was certainly skilled. It is evident that even in these early days, Sun and Wu expected to command not mere improvised levies, but professional armies, amenable to the strictest discipline. One of Sun's employers found, to his cost, how strict were the Master's principles in this regard. This ruler wanted to see a sham fight staged, and he allowed Sun to do this with the ladies of his harem. Unfortunately the ruler's head wife, womanlike, refused to obey an order. The master's rule, in such an emergency, was that of the White Queen, and without even the formality of a court-martial, he gave orders for the lady's decapitation. The husband naturally wanted to call the game off, but as Sun explained to him, no doubt with the blandest Chinese courtesy, this amounted to interference with a commander in the field, which was against the unchanging principles of the military art. It is to be assumed that the widower displayed an equal courtesy in admitting the logic of this reasoning, for the even tenor of the Master's way does not appear to have been disturbed by the execution of the sentence.

In Greece, we have no military classic like that of Sun and Wu. During the great time of the fifth century B.C., war is the business of all citizens alike, and the military specialist is slow to make his appearance, though one might well describe every Spar-

tan citizen as being a specialist in war, and his city as a barracks. At Athens the principles of military democracy were carried further than they ever have been before or since, every free Athenian being eligible for the post of general. The system was hardly a success. Energetic demagogues, like Cleon, proved as deficient in the elementary technique of the battlefield as some of Abraham Lincoln's amateur generals against Jackson and Lee. The idea—not unknown in modern times—that the man in the street is competent to sit in summary judgment on commanders in the field, led finally to judicial murder of the admirals who had won the great naval victory of Arginusæ. It is not surprising that this was the last Athenian victory over Sparta. The very next year the Grand Fleet, on which the life of Athens depended, was caught napping and ignominiously taken possession of by the enemy, while the crews were foraging over the neighbouring country.

Among the many questions that came up for discussion in Athens, was that of the comparative advantages of amateur and professional soldiership. One of the bravest citizen soldiers in the Spartan War had been the philosopher Socrates, and among his pupils was a young officer, called Xenophon, whose career was destined to be that of a soldier of fortune, and who, in that capacity, was to accomplish one of the greatest military feats of all time, for being elected, along with the Spartan Cheirisophus, to command a body of Greek mercenaries, abandoned leaderless in the heart of the Persian Empire, they succeeded in bringing them safely home through the perils of an unknown and hostile country. Xenophon's memoirs of Socrates's military conversations are therefore of peculiar interest, since no one could have been better qualified to appreciate the points at issue.

Curiously enough, no very decided conclusion seems to have been arrived at. Socrates appears at one moment to be all on the side of the specialist, provided that the scope of the military art is duly recognised. The command of soldiers is no more to be undertaken without training than any other skilled craft. Generalship is more than the mere knowledge of tactics on the battlefield—the officer must have the qualifications of an economist, a teacher, even, on occasion, an orator. The late Colonel Henderson could not have stated better the case against the military

amateur. But then, in the next dialogue, Socrates has boxed the compass, and argues that the man who knows how to manage a household will be equally well qualified for the management of an army, "for the conduct of private affairs differs from that of public affairs only in magnitude." The fact is that the amateur and the professional can each put a case against the other that it is hardly possible to refute. For the amateur fails by his lack of technical experience, and the professional, by narrowing his mind to fit one groove of military convention, sinks to something less than the complete man of the Socratic ideal.

Even in Greece, after the collapse of Athenian imperialism, war tends steadily to fall into the hands of specialists. Sparta had set the example by using Persian gold to buy up mercenaries for the latter stages of the war with Athens, and the other Greek cities, in the fourth century, were not slow in following suit. A new, scientific warfare, involving the oblique order of attack and the decisive rôle of the cavalry arm, was introduced by the Theban, Epaminondas, and led to the downfall of the hitherto invincible Spartan infantry. By the rising power of Macedon, under King Philip and his son, Alexander the Great, these tactics of the combined arms were still further developed and brought to perfection in the decisive battle of Chaeronea, that laid Greece helpless at the feet of the Macedonian. The force with which Alexander conquered the Persian Empire differed from the unwieldy hordes of the Great King in being no improvised levy, but a genuine long-service army trained by such seasoned experts as the veteran Parmenio, and capable of going anywhere or doing anything.

When Alexander died at the height of his career, his empire was carved up among professional soldiers, each fighting for his own hand, and dissipating in slaughter the wealth that might otherwise have gone to the building up of a Hellenic world power.* The professional soldier came to his own, for there was no incentive but pay to attach men to the standards of these rival dynasts. It was no uncommon thing for sides to be changed on the field of battle.

All these rivals were masters of their trade, the picked com-

* See the articles of Colonel Fuller in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* on the Wars of the Diadochi and the Macedonian Army.

manders of the greatest exponent hitherto known of the military art, an art developed by them to a pitch of refinement that makes their wars a subject of never-failing interest to the student. To the cavalry arm was added that of the elephant corps, which, for the first and last time, proved an element of decisive success. The improvement of missile weapons was such that we may not unreasonably date the birth of artillery from this time; the siege train that Demetrius Poliorcetes brought—unsuccessfully, as it proved—against Rhodes, being among the most formidable employed before the invention of gunpowder. The rival dynasts tended more and more to leave the fighting leadership to their subordinates, and confine themselves to the supreme direction and co-ordination of their forces. What war loses in heroism it gains in science. Not only for their tactics, but their strategy, do these campaigns deserve to rank as masterpieces.

And yet the armies were all the time deteriorating, for it is the weakness of the mercenary that in war technical skill is not everything. The fine loyalty, or patriotism, of the Macedonian armies, could not long survive the death of Alexander and the extermination of his family. Necessarily they became more and more diluted by hordes of barbarians who, if they had not the fighting qualities of Alexander's veterans, could at least be procured in practically unlimited numbers by any sovereign possessed of a sufficiently long purse. And just as quantity becomes a substitute for quality, so do the martial talents of the old type of leader tend to be superseded by those of the psychologist, whose skill consists in playing on the nerves, or loyalty, of his opponent's troops. "Blows," says Colonel Fuller, "give way to suggestions, and are aimed at the brain rather than the body." Thus, in the mercenary warfare of the Near East, we find the same principles being applied as had been formulated, two centuries before, by the Masters Sun and Wu, as the Chinese military gospel.

After the primitive horde or national militia is superseded, war becomes a perpetual see-saw between the amateur and professional ideals. To the professional, war is among the most skilled of human activities, with a technique that can only be mastered by the study and training of a life-time. War is, to him, an affair of specialists, and armies otherwise composed,

CHAPTER XIII

THE SOUL OF THE SOLDIER

THERE is no proverb more freely quoted by the worshippers of Mars than "*Homo homini lupus*—Man is a wolf to Man." If anybody has the right to feel insulted by this comparison, it is the quadruped, who, poor fellow, is usually starving when he ventures to attack Man, and whom not even hunger drives to playing "wolf" with his own kind.

It is a fallacy, however, to regard this super-wolfishness as if it were natural to the human species. Nearer to the truth is the theological conception of the Fall. The wolfish element has been grafted by Man on to his own nature, and a creature essentially inoffensive has specialized himself in an amazingly short time—as time is measured in evolution—into one more ferocious and predatory than shark or tiger.

We are, of course, referring to the variety of man described in the last chapter, to which the truest parallel is to be sought among the soldier ants. Not every sort of man is wolfish towards his kind. Many peoples, especially among the most primitive, are as gentle and inoffensive as any pre-human ancestor could possibly have been. And in the human hive, there are not one or two, but many kinds of specialization, some of which develop qualities the very opposite of wolfish.

Let us take one type whose origin, like that of the soldier, is lost in antiquity—that of the trader. No doubt in primitive times the trader must more often than not have had to go about armed, and what he could not get by bargaining he would sometimes take by force. But as a trader he had to proceed not by force, but by persuasion. The Phoenician who "on the beach undid his corded bales," had to find means of attracting those "shy traffickers, the dark Iberians," down from their hills, even if it was his intention to fleece them. We may picture our merchant—if we are inclined to villainize him—as oily, shifty, or

grasping, but not—so long as he remains a trader—as standing beside his wares, armed to the teeth, and thundering to his customers the alternative of death or shoddy. To conquer, in this field, he must stoop to persuasion.

Or let us take another type of specialized man, that of the priest. No doubt there were fighting priests in the old days as there are fighting parsons in our own, but this was in spite of, and not because of, their priesthood. The cruelty of the priest may be of a colder and more revolting kind than that of the warrior. But the argument of the priest, *qua priest*, is not that of physical force. The crudest magician or medicine man, where theology does not rise even to a Mumbo Jumbo, relies on powers that help when earthly armour faileth. More and more, as communities become civilized, do the men of the spirit tend to specialize themselves into a class apart from those of the sword. The priest's appeal is not, like the soldier's, to force, neither is it to reason. It is his business to ascertain and influence whatever powers may lie behind the appearance of things, and to regulate the community's life accordingly.

But the soldier, through all the vicissitudes of his development, has specialized himself for the purpose of making war, and of war, whether it is waged with stone axe and club, or with high explosives and poison gas, the definition of Clausewitz holds good, that it is an act of violence to compel our opponent to fulfil our will. The laws of man, of nature, and of God, demand each their own type of human specialist, but with justice, reason, holiness, creative beauty, the soldier has no concern. He is a specialist in violence, and, as honest Clausewitz goes on to say, this violence knows no bounds in its application. If civilized man has ceased to murder his prisoners and to devastate towns and countries in the good old style, that is merely, as the apostle of modern war is careful to explain, because intelligence has taught him more effectual means of applying force than these crude acts of instinct.

How shall we then define the essential soldier, the military specialist pure and simple? We shall be following the highest military authority if we say that he is one who aims at applying force *à outrance*, without regard to right or reason.

But this definition, though true, is not quite sufficient. For it is the part of the soldier not only to apply force, but himself to be

applied. Unless he is the supreme ruler of a state, like Napoleon, or, like Cæsar, a candidate in arms for such supremacy, the will that he seeks to impose is not his own. Even the great mercenary captains and condottieri, so long as they are in employment, are at least *ostensibly* striving to impose their employer's will. The soldier is, in fact, part of a human machine whose function it is to generate the greatest possible amount of energy, and concentrate it to one fine point of violence. Such a machine can only act efficiently if its parts function in absolute and harmonious subordination to the operator's purpose.

"Through obedience learn to command," is the motto inculcated in every Woolwich cadet. "Soldiers must obey in all things," says Sir Charles Napier. "They may and do laugh at foolish orders, but they nevertheless obey, not because they are blindly obedient, but because they know that to disobey is to break the backbone of their profession," or, as Tennyson puts it:

"What though the soldier knew
Some one had blundered,
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die."

So that we may enlarge our definition of the soldier, by the addition of three words. He is one who applies force & *outrance*, and *to order*, without regard to right or reason. To put it in another way, he seeks to prevail by violence and he obeys in order to prevail.

It is this that gives the military profession whatever it possesses of nobility. For with the soldier there is no question of obedience being better than sacrifice—obedience is sacrifice. In order that the will of his opponents may be broken, he sacrifices his own will and is at any moment ready to sacrifice his earthly existence. However cruel or lustful or mercenary he may be, he will always, so long as he takes the proper pride of every honest craftsman in his trade, be ready to echo those last recorded words of Judas Maccabæus—words most appropriately chosen for the epitaph of Admiral Cradock—"God forbid that we should do this thing and flee away from them. If our time be come, let us die valiantly for our brethren, and let us not stain our honour."

It is this element of supreme self-sacrifice that alone raises the soldier's calling to a higher moral plane than that of the public executioner. Jack Ketch at least confines his homicidal activities to those whom the law has singled out as unfit to live, and, under modern conditions, performs his work in the humanest manner than can be devised. The soldier's duty is to put innocent people wholesale to deaths that may be of excruciating agony. And yet every man in the street regards the hangman with horror, whereas it takes an inspired poet like Blake to shudder at the sight of a uniform. There is honour in self-sacrifice, even if the god turn out to be a devil. It must be a very bigoted pacifist whose blood is not warmed by such sentiment as,

Zebulon and Naphtali were a people
That jeopardized their lives unto death
In the high places of the field,

or on reading such a story as that of the officer who, without hesitation, flung his own body on to a bomb in the trenches, in order to save the lives of his men.

Even here we must be on our guard against the sentimental bias of ordinary human nature whenever military affairs come up for discussion. The essence of sacrifice is that it should be voluntary, and it is only the arm-chair civilian who seriously believes that it takes a hero to stop a bullet.

But, when every deduction of this sort has been made, we must fairly admit that war, even under the most rigid discipline, affords many opportunities for voluntary sacrifice, and that in so far as advantage is taken of them, even roughs like those of Wellington's command, and devils in human form, like the followers of Tilly and Alva, acquire a touch of something to which we cannot refuse the name of heroism.

Let us look somewhat more closely into the nature of this calling, whose end is to apply force à *outrance* and to order. Force is the argument of brutes. If two animals want the same piece of food, or the same female, they do not reason, but fall on with tooth and claw. Even among animals, there are limits to the application of force. A dog will not attack a female, and will allow a puppy to hang on to his ears, till he squeals with pain, without attempting to retaliate. But persuasion is a means

of prevailing from which the animal is debarred. He cannot apply reason to his controversies; he must either exert superior force or bluff his opponent into thinking that he can. It is only when Man comes down from his ancestral trees, and has added a reasoning brain to his grasping fore-limbs and a speaking tongue to his brain, that he attains to discourse of reason. The higher he rises above the animal, the more dependent he becomes on his reasoning faculties.

It is evident that in so far as Man elects to apply force to the settlement of his disputes, he is abdicating his lordship of creation and sinking back to the level of the brute. But force is the only argument that the soldier respects. If he delayed action until he had satisfied himself that the cause was right or reasonable, or if he were to enter into parley with the enemy on these subjects, he would be guilty of treasonable insubordination. His calling, therefore, makes him a perpetual reactionary of force.

The whole conception of military honour, in the most advanced as well as the most primitive communities, is bound up with the idea that force is the only way by which disputes can honourably be settled. One of the greatest obstacles in the way of international peace is the idea that there is something derogatory to a nation's honour in allowing any dispute of importance to be settled by arbitration. This is equivalent to the duellist's objection to letting a slight or injury be wiped out in anything but blood, and is, in fact, the voice of the beast in man safeguarding his own beastliness.

The training of the professional warrior is necessarily based upon the commandment formulated by Nietzsche—"be hard." To be proficient in the application of force, we have to blunt the finer and more distinctively human sensibilities. In training packs of hounds it is necessary to get them accustomed, early in the season, to the taste of blood, and in sporting circles it is the custom to perform a similar service for children by smearing their cheeks with the blood of a freshly slaughtered animal. So in Red Indian tribes, and in certain parts of the Pacific, prisoners have been handed over to be operated on by the children. The Spartan boys were hardened by ceremonial flogging, and the most callous brutality was encouraged towards Helots. In the English navy of Nelson's time, midshipmen were allowed to use

their rattans freely on the bodies of seamen. And even in republican Germany, it is difficult to eliminate the pre-war militarist custom of the students' duel, and the strange notion of manly beauty that reckons it by the conspicuousness of gashes.

Everybody who has been through the War will know what pains were taken to encourage the bayonet spirit in the rank and file. Men were drilled in plunging their weapons into sacks, in order that when the time came, they might be possessed of a lustful urge to bury them in the bodies of other men. The spirit thus engendered has been nowhere better described than by Lieutenant Jünger, who was in the great March offensive of 1918:

"No quarter was given . . . I cannot blame our men for their bloodthirsty conduct. . . . A man cannot change his feelings again during the last rush with a veil of blood before his eyes. He does not want to take prisoners but to kill. He has no scruples left; only the spell of primeval instinct remains." *

"Mercy, mercy!" cries a German, in General Crozier's narrative, as a Staffordshire potter prepares to bayonet him as he lies prostrate. "Mercy be damned," is the reply, as the cold steel pierces the windpipe.†

Nobody—certainly no soldier—will maintain that this spirit was confined to any particular army. Ordinary human nature, appropriately stimulated, will react in this way, and man, merged, body and soul, in that grand, collective act of violence that is called war, sinks to the level of the bull buffalo, goring and mangling his victim's body. This was so well recognised, that up to a recent period, soldiers who had taken a city by storm were conceded, by international law, the right to put the garrison to the sword and rape the women.

Let us regard the matter from the psychological standpoint. If psycho-analysis has done nothing else, it has at least shown how deeply rooted in our nature is the desire for power. From our earliest infancy, we feel the urge to assert our personalities, to break down those rival wills that everywhere cramp the scope of our own. Even the nicest little boys and girls pass through a phase in which they delight in reading stories of tortures, the fascination consisting in the idea of having some one—preferably

* *The Storm of Steel*, p. 263.

† *A Brass Hat in No Man's Land*, p. 228.

of trench life, then we must put armour on our nerves, and cease to bother about such trifles as the fall of a sparrow or the agony of a hare. If, on the other hand, we are sincere in our desire to exorcise the war spirit, then we must cease to stimulate in the hunting field the passions of the battlefield, and remember that he who delights in violence to his Cousin Beast is hardening himself for that supreme act of violence to his Brother Man that is called war.

In drawing attention to the effects of his calling on the soldier's character, we are attempting, not to accuse, but to understand him. It may well be argued that so long as the appeal to force is necessary, it is right that some, or all men, should train their minds and characters so as to be able to apply that force as effectively as possible when the time comes. If we cannot afford an undue sensitiveness to the feelings of man or beast, if we needs must stifle our sympathies and even cultivate blood-lust and Sadism, it follows that we must, spiritually as well as financially, cut our coats according to our cloth, and it is even open to us to join with Nietzsche and von Bernhardi in turning our necessity to glorious gain, and proclaiming that the real superman is not he who best loves all things, both great and small, including his enemies, but the proud, hard, masterful man, the true aristocrat, whose will is a law that, with the aid of his good sword (or tank, or flame thrower, or stink bomb), he knows how to impose.

There is no need for us to be tender-hearted, if we feel otherwise disposed, but there is no reason for our being muddle-headed, and refusing to look facts in the face. If you are to devote your life to performing acts of violence—and remember, the language is not ours, but that of Clausewitz—you are subjecting yourself to a law whose fulfilling is the reverse of love. If, on other grounds, you should come to believe that progress from blind matter, through Man, to something that for want of a better word we may call divine, is essentially a progress in love, then you must face the fact, that among the sacrifices demanded from the soldier, that of life is by no means the greatest. He must sacrifice his soul. He can never, in the sense that Christ used the word, aspire to be perfect.

It is from this standpoint that we can appreciate the words put by Lowell into the mouth of Mr. Ezekiel Biglow:

violence necessary to breaking down the enemy's will, unless he could forecast approximately in what way the multitudes under his command would respond to any given order. He has to think in terms of the machine as a whole, and all that he requires of the parts is that they shall function in such smooth and calculable unison, that he will be under no necessity of distinguishing them as individuals.

It is this habit of uniformity that it is the prime object of military training to instil. The uniform is symbolic of the soldier. Not only in appearance and function, but in mind and soul, must he conform to the prescribed standard. It is not without its significance that two of the most thorough-going attempts to set up spiritual autocracies have been those of Ignatius Loyola and William Booth, both of whom took the title of General, and organized their Society of Jesus and Salvation Army on strictly military lines.

To become standardized in this way is to renounce one's birth-right of civilization. It is the method of most primitive and barbarous communities to make all men conform to one pattern. To the savage, any attempt to strike out a line for oneself is impious. Every one of his actions takes the form of obedience, most often to the authority of some god or immemorial custom. Such an appeal to authority is essentially an appeal to force. The sole and sufficient argument for conformity is that of the Koran, "It will be better for you."

The centurion of the New Testament was speaking for soldiers of all time when he proclaimed himself a man under authority. At a stage of low human development, the same could have been said of any member of the species. But Man has gradually acquired discourse of reason in order to think out things for himself, and adapt his conduct to any new situation that may arise. Like Herr Kohler's chimpanzee, who made a pile of packing cases in order to reach up to a banana, he is able to cut loose from the past and think out something wholly new. The superman, if he ever comes, will be an authority unto himself; he will respond to every new demand of his environment by an innovation of creative genius. His mind will be free in the fullest sense.

But from this freedom the soldier is debarred. His very uni-

form proclaims him a man under authority. His habits of mind are standardized in the school of obedience. He cannot think out original solutions to problems, old or new, because the way in which he will react has to be determined in advance. Thus, however much the human mind may achieve of freedom, the soldier remains a perpetual reactionary of force and authority.

In our survey of Assyria, Sparta and Prussia, we saw how militarism can act as a blight on every form of peaceful culture. There is something irreconcileably antagonistic between the service of violence and that of reason or creative beauty. The effect of militarism on the life of a community may be likened to that of weeds in a garden, sucking up the nourishment on which the tender flowers of the mind depend for their subsistence. But now we are considering the effect of his calling on the soldier himself, and from the soldier's standpoint. How far does the sacrifice of mental freedom, that every soldier is bound to make, affect his military efficiency?

For there can be no question but that the higher the rank of the soldier, and the nearer we approach to modern conditions, the more important becomes intelligence as a military asset. There may come a time, in the successful officer's career, when instead of being under authority, he finds himself called upon to exercise both intelligence and authority in the highest degree, and the humblest corporal, perhaps even a private, may have thrust upon his brain the responsibility for some vital decision. The question then arises of how far mental efficiency has been engendered by the commander's, or soldier's, previous training.

The answer has already been suggested. You cannot stunt the intelligence and develop it at the same time, and to foster the habit of constant submission to authority, coupled with the acceptance of force as a substitute for reason, is as effective a method of stunting the mind as any that can be devised. Like water that has run for a long time over yielding soil, the soldier's thought has cut itself channels. Or, to put it in another way, well-trodden and fenced-in paths have been established in his mind between impression and action. Some quite new fact or situation may enter the gate of knowledge, but the brain is not free to deal with the newcomer on its merits. Only certain habitual trains of association can be set up, such as lead by one

of a few familiar paths to one of the few stereotyped modes of action.

An extreme instance of this habit of mind is that of a regiment of Pathan Sepoys, who, on coming into action for the first time in Mesopotamia, are said to have made a gallant attack, which promised to be crowned with success, upon a Turkish position. When they arrived within fifty yards of their enemy, instead of rushing forward to storm the position, the men halted and proceeded calmly to unfix bayonets. It was what they had been taught to do in similar circumstances at manoeuvres. It was a hookum (order), and had never been formally withdrawn. It was no business of a good sepoy to question his hookums.

There is another story, of a less tragic nature, also emanating from India. A certain detachment, on frontier service, received a consignment of crude castor oil, for application to the men's boots. Unfortunately the distribution was entrusted to a sergeant who, knowing but one official use for the liquid, and not considering it his duty or the men's to reason why, compelled each of them, then and there, to swallow his portion—with dire results.

Probably every one has heard the story of the old soldier, who was carrying home his dinner on a plate, but who, on some mischievous boy shouting "Shun!" brought his hands smartly to his sides and let the plate fall crashing to the ground.

This habit of instant and unquestioning obedience, which it is the object of military discipline and drill to implant, has not without reason been accounted the basis of soldierly efficiency. It is, as Colonel Henderson points out, something entirely different from the self-respect of the law-abiding civilian, which "does not carry with it a mechanical obedience to command, nor does it merge the individual in the mass, and give the tremendous power of unity to the efforts of large numbers." * Henderson reinforces this judgment by quoting that of one of the Confederate generals, in the American Civil War, on the brave and intelligent Southern troops. "The Confederate," he says, "knew when a movement was false and a position untenable, and he was too little of a machine to give in such cases the whole-hearted service which might have redeemed the blunder. The other evil was an ever-growing one. His disregard of discipline and independence

* *Stonewall Jackson*, Vol. II, p. 356.

of character made him often a straggler, and by straggling the fruit of many a victory was lost." *

Here we have the opinion of an experienced general, endorsed by one of the greatest authorities on modern war, to the effect that nothing short of mechanical obedience will suffice for the soldier, and that independence of character is a positive source of danger. Nor are the requirements of discipline any less severe in the training of officers, though the mode of enforcing it may be different. In the Roman army, not even the consul's son could escape the axe for disobedience to an order, and a Crown Prince of militarist Prussia was in imminent danger of being shot for desertion. Both Wellington and Napoleon, so different in other ways, were agreed in being martinet with their subordinates. It was typical of Wellington to have put Captain Ramsay, the most brilliant of his artillery officers, under arrest, for having misunderstood an order at Vittoria, and Napoleon's marshals went in such terror of exceeding their instructions that they continually failed him by their unwillingness to take any initiative at all.

There is another feature of an officer's training that has, in the past, hampered his intellectual development. Before he can become a thinker, he has got to qualify as a fighter and a leader. If any ordinary person were to be asked what is the supreme virtue that a soldier ought to cultivate, he would answer, "courage." Even now, when a higher commander rightly esteems it one of the first of his duties to avoid any sort of danger, and when the commander-in-chief has a safer job than that of any other soldier and most civilians, it is customary to allude to any distinguished veteran as "the gallant officer." It is doubtful whether even the gentleman in question would accept "the learned officer" as quite a satisfactory substitute. It might even sound a little sarcastic.

In the days of small battlefields and close ranges, courage, of the infectious sort that communicates itself to subordinates, was no doubt the first thing needful for every leader. The king himself was the war-lord, who not only organized victory, but led his men into battle. Enneatum, we saw, marched at the head of

* *Ibid.*, p. 358.

his column. Pharaoh Rameses II, the greatest fighter, next to Thothemes III, of the fighting Eighteenth Dynasty, having, by dividing his forces, got himself into an almost hopeless quandary at Kadesh, in Syria, managed to retrieve the day by superhuman feats (at least if we may trust his own account) of personal courage. The great Assyrian conquerors divided most of their time between hunting and fighting. Alexander charged home at the head of his cavalry at Chæronea, at the Granicus, and at Arbela, and on one occasion leapt down from the wall of a besieged city and defended himself for some time single-handed. We read of the young Alfred, England's Darling, charging uphill "like a boar" against the Danes, and of what was expected from a medieval sovereign we may judge from Drayton's romantic account of Agincourt:

"This while our noble king,
His broadsword brandishing,
Down the French host did ding
As to o'erwhelm it;
And many a deep wound lent,
His arms with blood besprent,
And many a cruel dent
Bruised his helmet."

Kings who did not fight were apt to come to bad ends. It was a short step from commanding the army to commanding the throne. Once the Merovingian Kings of France allowed their Mayors of the Palace to become leaders of the host, the doom of their line was sealed. How dangerous it was, in an oriental country, to depute the command, is shown by the fate of the Israelite King, Joram, who, simply because he had returned to his capital to recover from wounds, was deposed and murdered by the general whom he had left in charge of his field army. In medieval England, an incompetent soldier, like Edward II, and a peaceful saint and scholar, like Henry VI, had no chance of survival in the royal struggle for existence.

This tradition of leadership in the field continues to survive, even though it has gone out of date in the higher command. The place for the modern army-leader is not on the field of battle,

but in an office or railway carriage, and he has just as much and as little need for courage as the organizer of any other big business. Quite literally

"He leads his army from behind,
He finds it less exciting."

The one exception to this rule of office leadership occurs in naval war, where the admiral on the bridge or in the conning-tower of his flagship exposes himself as much, and has as much need for personal courage, as the humblest seaman. How long it will be before even fleets are controlled by wireless from some distant office, is a matter for conjecture.

But the education of leaders, in the most conservative of all professions, is still, in spite of staff colleges and specialist courses, essentially that of the old-fashioned type of "gallant soldier." The young officer in all armies is first broken in to those habits of machine-like obedience which are rightly deemed indispensable in the field, but which are actual handicaps to the free play necessary for minds that organize victory. The man who achieved the final victory of the Allies, had been the soldier, of all others, in the Great War, whose previous career had, partly by his own choice, been that, not of a fighting leader, but of a student and professor. The young Foch's school report described him, at the age of fifteen, as "Esprit géometrique. A l'étoffe d'un polytechnicien." * As Captain Liddell Hart says of him, "With the officers he neither sought nor attained popularity, and to the men he was a symbol." † And even in Foch's mentality, the intellect was all too frequently overborne by emotional militarism, voicing itself in the parrot cry of "*Attaquez! attaquez!*"

The contrast between the student's training and that of so many commanders in the Great War, will explain why that episode in the world's history can most fittingly be described as a tragedy of blunders. Habits of mind engendered by the daily routine of regimental life, and even by leadership in manœuvres and such small wars as those in which English, French, German and Italian forces had from time to time been engaged, proved worse than useless when it was a question of handling the vast masses of

* Quoted, B. H. Liddell Hart, *Reputations*, p. 158.

† *Ibid.*, p. 165.

men pitted against each other on the Western Front. It is perhaps fortunate that the "brass hats" were wedded to the old traditions—otherwise they might have come nearer than they did to accomplishing the suicide of civilization.

There is yet another determining factor of military psychology. This is the constant air of unreality that invests martial proceedings at all times but those of actual warfare. The peace-time soldier is either engaged in perfecting himself for a task that he may never be called upon to perform, or else he finds employment by figuring in all kinds of state ceremonials. As this is by far the most spectacular part of his peace-time duties, he is apt to be judged by his capacity for adorning pageants more than his prowess in arms. In the present century, the uselessness of such shows, from a military point of view, has been accentuated by the fact that their close order formations and movements no longer bear the remotest resemblance to anything that could possibly be seen on the field of battle. The effect of this waste of time in executing mechanical movements in fancy dress can only be to dull the intellect and quench any spark of latent imagination. So long as life lasts, a man's past never dies; not an hour or a moment of his conscious life but has had its part in making his personality what it is. Whether we like it or not, we cannot deny that the mind of a leader on whom the fate of millions and perhaps of civilization itself may depend, bears the impress of every one of these interminable hours, not of soldiering, but of the sort of work that only differs from that of theatrical supers in being so officially stereotyped as to call for a great deal less intelligence.

To sum up:

(1) The military mind, being schooled in habits of mechanical obedience, is not free to develop normally with the advance of civilization. It remains primitive.

(2) The virtues engendered on the parade ground and in the field are no qualification for high command under modern conditions.

(3) A great part of a soldier's time is passed in ceremonial routine, that has lost whatever usefulness it may once have possessed as a training for war, and whose effects as mind training are positively harmful.

cut off every nation, including his own, from the satisfaction of its elementary needs. When he put the coping stone on his folly, by employing hundreds of thousands of his best troops in trying to make a subject of his former ally, Spain, he had succeeded in creating for himself two fronts, the Western in a state of constant activity, the Eastern ready to wake up at any moment, and employing a great army of his troops even in intervals of peace. The collapse came when the infatuated Emperor rode in the midst of a vast cosmopolitan horde across the Russian plains to deserted Moscow, and not finding it possible to do anything there but starve, rode back again in the midst of a perishing army, of which he was one of the few survivors. That collapse, once started, could be arrested by no human power nor generalship. It was Napoleon himself who had wantonly engineered the downfall of his empire. By stopping at the Alps and the Rhine, and making his peace with England,* he could have established it on impregnable foundations. But to go on widening the span of a bridge till it falls into the river, is called by another name than genius among civil engineers.

It was no vain boast of Napoleon that his presence on the field of battle was equivalent to a reinforcement of 40,000 men. But we must remember that if Napoleon could inspire his armies on the field, he showed a perverse ingenuity in ruining the quality of that splendid army which he had inherited from the Revolution. The half-million he led to die in Russia were a mere mob compared with his old army of Italy, and it is significant of the latter part of his career that his generals and soldiers failed him as frequently as they had retrieved his fortunes in the old days. For this the blame must lie at Napoleon's door. He had put his faith, not in the quality, but the bigness of his battalions. He treated men as if they were machines, and by ruthless centralization crushed out every spark of initiative in their leaders. His Marshals would do nothing without orders, and displayed, as time went on, an increasing unfitness for independent command. It was a far cry from the Desaix of Marengo and the Augereau of Castiglione to the Ney and Grouchy of the Waterloo campaign.

As for the strategy of Napoleon's campaigns and his general-

* This was quite possible in 1806, when the peace-loving Fox was holding out the olive branch.

ship in the field, it must be remembered that never was he pitted against a competent commander (with the brief and partial exception of the Archduke Charles) during the years when his star was in the ascendent. His most striking victories, like those of Hannibal, were won over opponents who played into his hands. He was only once, during the whole of his career, brought face to face with a tactician of the first quality, and that was at Waterloo. Two days before, at Ligny, he had proved that his skill was as great as ever against such an opponent as Blücher. "Old Blücher," Wellington had said on surveying the Prussian dispositions at Ligny, "will get a damned good licking," and sure enough he did. But at Waterloo, Napoleon was outclassed at every point of the game—the Napoleonic battle, of which so much has been written, missed fire, as signally as the Hanniballic battle at Zama. It is left to admirers of Napoleon to put the blame, alternatively, on to their idol's luck, illness, army, or subordinates.

The Man of Destiny was a born gambler, and his strategy was a series of gambles. Backed by the troops and generals of the first part of his career, before he had ruined the quality of both, he could take almost any liberty with impunity. The Egyptian gamble, it is true, ended in the loss of both fleet and army, but that loss he cut by leaving the army to its fate. His gamble on outwitting Nelson and invading England turned out a fiasco, but this the Austrians retrieved for him, in the nick of time, by offering him an army to capture. His Consulate ought to have been nipped in the bud at Marengo, and in the greatest of all his campaigns, that of Austerlitz, he was really in a hopeless position, with the Prussian army mobilizing and the Prussian King gradually screwing up his courage towards the point of launching it at his communications, but he staked successfully on the chance of the Russo-Austrian staff being mad enough to force the pace and give him the opportunity of ending the war in one decisive stroke.

No doubt, with such cards as he held, he was justified in making the highest bids, but when he had ruined his own hand and the balance of chances had shifted to the other side, to continue the practice was suicidal obstinacy. His Spanish adventure was not only a wicked but a blind gamble, and it drove him to bankruptcy.

His Russian adventure was a series of gambles, in which his only resource was to keep on doubling the stakes. When he was driven to the end of his resources at Moscow, he actually proposed to solve the difficulty by a march on St. Petersburg, a project so palpably insane that even his marshals refused to execute it.

When the tide began to flow against him, he did not even show himself a cool or accurate gambler. Along with his recklessness went a curious hesitancy to play out the hand when everything depended on his doing so. When the Russian army turned and faced him in front of Moscow, he had his one chance of dealing the knock-out blow that might have broken the Tsar's will to resistance, but his nerve suddenly failed him, and he refused to send in his Guard on the ground that he dared not risk his last reserve at such a distance from Paris. Again, after his last great victory of Dresden in 1813, his destiny presented him with one fleeting opportunity of eclipsing all his previous victories by cutting off the beaten and dispirited Grand Army of the Allies, with the sovereigns of Russia, Austria and Prussia, in the defiles of the Bohemian mountains. But, like the Austrian general at Marengo, his interest in driving home his victory seemed suddenly to evaporate; he rode contentedly back to Dresden, apparently in the best of health and spirits, leaving his generals without orders, and one solitary army corps that had arrived on the enemy's line of retreat to be destroyed unsupported. Lord Wolseley, with a soldier's admiration for his hero, has had to invent a convenient and mysterious disease to explain this and similar lapses of the Napoleonic genius.

Those who care to follow Napoleon's proceedings a few weeks later, when the allies were closing in upon him at Leipzig, may study him in a mood of hopeless vacillation the very reverse of Napoleonic in the popular sense. It is at this time that he committed the most glaring, and elementary, of the blunders that only become more conspicuous in the last stage of his career, because then he could not rely, as he could at Marengo, on his troops and his enemies to cancel the penalty for him. This—when his desertion by his German auxiliaries made it a matter of life or death to him to eke out his last resources in French manpower—consisted in his abandonment, in various German fortresses, of some 150,000 of his best troops, whom the allies, de-

taching from their enormous numbers such troops as were too old or too raw for field service, quietly proceeded to starve out. This act of supreme folly, committed in cold blood and apparently in a sheer fit of strategical absent-mindedness, has never, so far as I know, found any defenders even among Napoleon's idolators. All that can be done is to assume that Napoleon was somehow not Napoleon when he perpetrated it, and to attach as little significance to the episode as, apparently, he did himself.

There is one other blind spot in Napoleon's mentality that calls for notice. This man of blood and destiny, living in an age of mechanical revolution, shares with practically every other member of his profession their lack of interest in—almost amounting to subconscious aversion from—the application of science to war. The artillery, of whose tactical use he was so consummate a master, might have remained for ever, so far as he was concerned, the good old muzzle-loading smooth-bores that blew a whiff of grape-shot through the Paris streets. And yet, when he stole the bronze horses from Venice, he would have done better, in his own interests, had he also stolen a beautiful model of a quick-firing gun, a pom-pom on the principle of a revolver, which was already nearly two hundred years old, and may now be seen in the armoury of the Doge's Palace. When he was racking his brains for an effective counter to England's sea-power, the steam-boat might have been his for the asking. The principle of the tank was as old as John Ziska and Napier of Ettrick; the idea of gas attack was simmering in the fertile brain of Cochran; the rifled barrel had already made its appearance in the English army; percussion ignition, in place of the old flint lock, was the subject of experiment, but of none of these developments did Napoleon evince the slightest comprehension. It is doubtful whether his can be described as a really elastic or progressive intelligence. It never seems to have occurred to him to think out any tactical reply to the British opposition of line to column. He was content to come on in the old way—and was beaten in the old way.

We have dwelt thus long on Napoleon's career, because, by fairly general agreement, he ranks as the greatest master of war in modern times. By the military pundits of his own country, he has been elevated to a position of authority comparable to

the experience of most civilized communities, when spiritual mindedness takes the form of a violent revulsion against the animal in Man, a proud resolve to break the bonds of sensual desire and trample the old Adam underfoot. Even the instinct of self-preservation may be annihilated, as when a certain order of Jain ascetics, after twelve years of ferocious mortification, used to crown their triumph over the flesh by starving themselves to death.

But it is no more possible to be in the body and independent of it, than it is for a man to raise himself from the ground by pulling at his bootlaces. The greatest leaders of religion have taken a more balanced view of the good life. The Buddha, like Martin Luther, tried the way of uncompromising austerity, and found it a blind alley. The Son of Man came eating and drinking. Every kind of compromise has been made between the flesh and the spirit, from ascetic suicide to the frank and conscientious sensuality of the Chinese Yang Chu.

Thus the good, or civilized, life has by no means always been sought by mortifying the senses. There is consequently not only a spiritual, but an economic path to perfection. Enough material wealth may be accumulated by a community to enable some of its members to become parasitic, for their material wants, on the rest. Those very Jains, who destroyed themselves in their desire to subdue the flesh, were not above taking round their mendicant's bowls for the contributions of the pious—otherwise starvation would not have been postponed for twelve years. "If," says Saint Paul, "we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter that we should reap your worldly things?" The less the good life is tinged with asceticism, the more generous the reaping has to be. The democratic culture of Athens was rendered possible, not only by the labour of some nine slaves to every free citizen, but by the exploitation of nominally allied cities. The aristocratic culture of the eighteenth century assumed the existence of a leisured class regulating its life by elaborately artificial standards, sowing spiritual things in the shape of refinement, beauty, and social stability, and reaping worldly things in that of rents, titles, enclosed commons, and special privileges.

Between those who, like Shakespeare, would seek the welfare

of all in the observance by each of degree, priority, and place, and those who, like the Bolsheviks, would make every member of the community at the same time a worker and a partaker in the benefits of a new machine-made culture, it is not for us to decide. Our concern is to show that civilized Man has, by one means or another, continually striven to rise above the tyranny of his animal desires, and not only to live, but to live well.

Of civilization, thus conceived, the great enemy is war. The more any community is absorbed in the business of destruction—or, for that matter, of self-defence—the less chance is there for the tender plants of culture to flower. Sword in hand, any lout of a legionary is a better man than Archimedes. For war, that claims to foster heroism, has no use for genius.

Of all words that have passed into European currency, none has been more tragically debased than "hero." This, which is the homage paid by language to the divine element in human nature, has been appropriated almost exclusively to prowess in war. The Heldenplatz at Vienna takes its name from statues commemorating the two most distinguished soldiers of the Royal House, one of them demonstrating his heroism by brandishing a flag in his right hand, and managing a rearing horse with his left. That is the sort of thing that a hero is supposed to do, and the sort of person that in an aristocratic age a hero is supposed to be. In our own more democratic time, the term is applied by civilians to any volunteer or conscript figuring in the casualty lists, and sometimes to all sorts and conditions of combatants on active service.

It is possible that this reduction to absurdity of the old ideal will clear the way for a new conception of heroism—that of civilization. We shall then give prime honour to the glorious company of the poets, the goodly fellowship of the sages, the noble army of thinkers and discoverers. We shall recognise as heroes not those who have dealt out death and destruction, but the creators and life-givers.

If mankind had never been endowed with imagination, and had confined itself to the satisfaction of its material wants by the most obvious means, it is probable that the leaders of the host would everywhere have reigned supreme. Once a struggle for survival becomes general, it is obvious that the more unreservedly

born, in the fullness of time, creative genius and spiritual insight. Once let men be set apart from their fellows to deal with a world born of the imagination, and sooner or later the key will be discovered to a life fit to be called good. Mental images are less stubborn things than facts, and gods are capable of changing their nature without any ostensible change of attributes.

We are therefore using the language, not of sentiment, but of sober truth, when we say that the highest form of heroism is displayed not in waging, but in avoiding war. Dogs, Doctor Watts assures us,

"delight to bark and bite,
For 'tis their nature to,"

but in the determination that no necessity of survival shall allow tooth and claw to claim the whole of a people's energies, in the ambition that does not limit itself to survival, but demands that life shall be raised from the animal to the divine level, there is that which justifies the proudest of all human claims:

"Thou art a Man, God is no more,
Thine own humanity learn to adore."

We are in a better position to appreciate the heroism involved in such an attitude, now that we have followed the tale of great and civilized peoples sucked into the maelstrom of martial competition, until the deep has gone over their souls. Egypt, after the expulsion of her Hyksos conquerors, was such a power, and her mighty Pharaohs, the Thothmes and Rameses, appear commonplace and melodramatic beside the tragic figure of the young Akhenaton who, however much we may criticise his methods, was determined to sacrifice everything, even Empire, to the God of his vision.

The civilization of China, whose stability depended upon the maintenance of correct standards of value in every department of life, never yielded to the temptation of setting a high value upon military prowess. There would have been every excuse for her if she had done so, for the civilization of her river valleys was perpetually threatened, from the North and West, by that most terrible of all human scourges constituted by the Tartar horsemen of the steppes. But even when, as under her famous

Han and Tang dynasties, her emperors found themselves compelled to counter the menace by a policy of cautiously regulated expansion, it was no desire of military glory that impelled them. The troops they employed were largely recruited from the lowest, and even the criminal classes, who could not only easily be spared, but could be used to colonize a still disputed frontier with better results to themselves and the State than ever were to accrue from the British experiment of convict transportation. But phases of conquest and expansion were exceptional in Chinese warfare. No Chinese figure ever rose remotely comparable to those of Thothmes III, Assur-nasir-pal, Alexander, Genghis-Khan, Napoleon, and the other great conquerors of history. Such laurels as theirs would probably have seemed, to any one steeped in the traditions of Chinese education, as unworthy a man of superior breeding. The most famous and characteristic product of Chinese military genius is the Great Wall, erected in the hope of providing a permanent barrier behind which the blessings of peaceful civilization might be established and flourish for all generations.

The Chinese way of honouring a hero cannot be better illustrated than by a passage, quoted by Professor Wilhelm, from the *Kia Yu*, in honour of King Wu, who dethroned the tyrant Yin Shang, and founded the Chou Dynasty:

"When on the homeward journey Westward he had crossed the Yellow River, he set free the war-horses . . . and dispersed the draught oxen to pasture in the wilds of the Peach Forest, never to be yoked again. He had the chariots and coats of mail smeared with the blood of cattle and kept in the arsenals, to show that they were not to be used again. He had the shields and swords turned upside down and set on one side, wrapped in tiger skins. He turned his generals and commanders into feudal princes, and commanded them to seal up the bows and arrows in quivers.

"So it was known throughout the kingdom that King Wu would have resource to weapons no more . . . the army was disbanded . . . the heroes with the strength of tigers put off their swords." *

The disbandment of the army was celebrated by an archery

* *A Short History of Chinese Civilization* by R. Wilhelm, p. 106.

festival, which, in the East, took place to the melody of the Wild Cat's Head, and from which military practice was expressly barred. The conqueror thenceforth devoted himself to securing the peaceful happiness of his subjects, guiding the sacred plough, making constant tours of inspection, officiating at sacrifices, and not disdaining to take part in the feasts and dances of his subjects.

"How comprehensible," says the Chinese book, "that the music of Wu has lasted so long!" *

And yet, we learn from Professor Wilhelm that the sage Confucius maintained that the great musical rites with which Wu celebrated his victory, "though perfectly beautiful were not perfectly good," the flaw, apparently, consisting in the fact that they "gave expression to a wrongful sentiment, namely hatred of the enemy." †

Not only Confucius, but the rest of the sages who formulated the doctrines on which Chinese civilization is based, with one accord sought and ensued that peace which is the product of goodwill among men. "The root of all Confucian ethical and political thought," according to a modern commentator, Liang Chi-Chao, "is Jen," ‡ and Jen, in that Chinese that alone among human scripts enshrines the meaning of its ideas, is formed by combining the character representing Man with that representing Two or Plurality. An admirably simple way of expressing the Pauline idea "Ye are members of one another."

"Where Jen is," said Confucius, "there Man is," and indeed this quality of "Two-man" constitutes, in his view, the most important element in human nature, and the whole art of regulating life consists in widening this natural blend of affection and sympathy until "Two-man" becomes "All-man." But Confucius differs from idealists like Mo Ti, who laid down universal and impartial love as a first principle from which all human conduct was to be deduced. Confucius was, in spirit, an evolutionist, and believed in the development of love from its beginnings in the family, until the "two-ness" of Jen expanded into a wider and wider plurality. His affection for his own children would teach

* Ibid., p. 107.

† Ibid., p. 115.

‡ *History of Chinese Political Thought*, p. 38.

set its face against the Darwinian necessity, as turned aside from it, in its quest for the perfect life. Nowhere in India do we find the bias against militarism that seems innate in the Chinese temperament. She has been the mother of fighting races, Rajputs, Sikhs, Mahrattas. Each of her two great religious epics derives whatever unity it possesses from the slender thread of a war plot. Her gods and goddesses, in some of their symbolic manifestations, are not only militant but bloodthirsty.

With that enormous tolerance and receptivity that is the unique quality of her civilization, India has afforded scope to every form of human activity, not even excepting those of the thug and the prostitute. But in allowing all, she refuses to over-value the importance of any. No doubt there must be soldiers, a caste of Kshatriya, with an appropriate caste pride and standard of honour. But for what purpose does this caste exist? Solely in order to afford protection to the Brahmans, those who are set apart for the purpose of realizing the good life in the highest attainable degree. The proudest Kshatriya, even if he be a King and a hero, is inferior to the humblest Brahman.

It is essential to realize how much of its distinctive quality Indian civilization derives from its unquestioning faith in reincarnation. Once let a man believe that his life is no unique experience, even for himself, but one in a vast series, in each of which his fate is determined by those that have gone before, and the universe will appear to him in a wholly new perspective. He can afford to wait. He is under no necessity of realizing all his possibilities of happiness and spiritual development in this one journey from the cradle to the grave. Let him patiently accumulate merit in a low sphere, and in the course of ages, he will achieve the highest.

It is thus that the Indian mind has tended to regard the achievement of temporal glory and dominion with a certain faintness of interest. The business of government and fighting, like that of trading or of scavenging, has got to be carried out by the appropriate people, and they have their reward. But these are not the most important things in life. When the Mohammedan invaders, and finally the English, seized the reins of government, the even tenour of Hindu civilization was hardly disturbed. Great religious movements, like that of the Vishnavites, developed and

flourished just as if a Gupta or a Maurya, instead of an infidel, had sat upon the throne. To the ascetic, sitting under a vertical sun between four fires, or measuring with his body every foot of the thousand or more miles to the holy city, what mattered it who collected the taxes or who gave orders to the soldiers? It mattered little more to the peasant, who expected nothing from this life but toil and a bare subsistence, and when even subsistence failed, was not unwilling to resign himself to another step upwards on the ladder of his existence. It was only when that God-drunken tyrant, Aurungzebe, bent the whole powers of the State to depriving the Hindu of his faith, that the Mahratta hill-men of the green-clad Ghats broke into inextinguishable revolt, but the immense body of Hindus accepted even Aurungzebe with the composure of fatalism.

The present day phenomenon of Indian nationalism must be welcomed or deplored as the outward and visible sign of Western education and ways of thought having infected the Indian mind. The achievement of Swaraj, or self-government, would appear to an old-fashioned Brahman an end too trivial to be worth the expenditure of energy. Provided the work were tolerably performed, it might equally well be turned over to an Englishman as to an Indian. But if the shadow even of the Viceroy were to fall on his food, that Brahman would rather starve than be contaminated thereby.

If we read Indian history, we shall discover how little there is in it of what we are accustomed to look for in history books. India has produced no great conquerors, though she has submitted to many. Her greatest battles are those that have laid the country at the foot of some invader. About the history even of her most powerful native dynasties we are singularly poorly informed—no one for instance knows the circumstances that ruined the work of her great Asoka, and brought his line to an end shortly after his death. The Indian has seldom had enough interest in the prosaic affairs of mundane politics to make him very desirous of an exact record. His epics are a collection of wild impossibilities that make even those of pre-Christian Ireland seem as sober as blue-books by comparison. He lives, by deliberate choice, in a world of symbols and ideas, and the prospect on which he delights to gaze is that revealed not by the bodily

eyes, but by the third, or spiritually discerning eye that is the special property of Siva. In consequence India, with the possible exception of Palestine, has been the most potent generating centre of spiritual influence that the world has known.

It is perhaps hard for us Westerners to realize that in India, as in China, the good life is valuable for its own sake, and not on account of any material or temporal advantages that it brings in its train. Those who read that wonderful exposition of the Indian way of life contained in the so-called Laws of Manu, may at first feel some indignation at what may seem the extravagant sanctity and privilege accorded to the Brahman caste. But when we come to the programme of life prescribed for these men of twice-born holiness, we begin to doubt whether the most miserable outcast of our modern slums would wish to exchange his lot for theirs. No sooner has the Brahman fulfilled his allotted time as a householder, and seen his first grandchild and his first wrinkles, than he knows that it is time for him to lay the world aside, and enter upon the third stage of his career, that of a hermit in the forest, subsisting upon herbs, and mortifying his flesh with every imaginable austerity. If he survive for a quarter of a century, he will then be fit to enter upon the last and most exalted stage of all, that of the wandering holy man—a type that may be encountered to-day throughout the length and breadth of India.

Among men whose minds are thoroughly persuaded of the unreality of worldly ambitions, it is unlikely that conquerors will arise, or if they do, they will seek to prevail by very different weapons from those of the warrior. In no other land but India can we conceive of such a monarch as the Buddhist Asoka, who flourished in the midst of the 3rd century B.C., and is surely among the brightest examples on human record of the Hero as King. He opened his reign with what, in the estimation of any ordinary monarch, would have constituted a glorious achievement, for he defeated and conquered a rival people, the Kalingas, dwelling along the coast of the Bay of Bengal. But his victory, and the spectacle of the suffering it entailed, instead of stimulating Asoka's pride, moved him to horror and repentance which he caused to be engraved in words of poignant sincerity on the face of the rock. The loss of a hundredth or even a thousandth

part of the victims would now, he pleads, be a matter for bitter regret. Even against the savage tribes of the forest, he will no longer employ violence, but seek to convert them by words of pity and love. He has learnt that even injury must be endured with patience, and that the only conquest worth attaining is that which comes by the law of piety, a conquest that is everywhere accompanied by delight. Such a conquest he claims to have made, by means of his missionary envoys, in regions as far afield as Macedonia and Egypt.

The study of these wonderful rock and pillar Edicts is enough to convince us that love was in the fullest and most literal sense the fulfilling of King Asoka's law, love not only for men, but for the beasts, whom he refrained from hunting, would not allow to be ill-treated, sacrificed, or slaughtered for his table, and for whom he caused hospitals to be provided. When we talk of progress, it should not be forgotten that it is now more than two thousand years since the death of Asoka.

The spirituality of India has consisted in the fact that her people, more than any others, have contrived to turn aside from the pursuit of obvious and material ambitions to that of spiritual development. The Buddha, the greatest of her many religious geniuses, came to his fellow men with the offer of a way of escape from the tyranny of worldly ambitions and animal desires. To the enlightened Buddhist, as to the enlightened Hindu, the world's great conquerors would appear like men who have successfully indulged a craving for strong drink—the remedy is not to satisfy but to take away the craving, and let the tortured spirit find peace. A Napoleon or a Frederick would certainly have drawn tears of pity from the Buddha. What we have called the Darwinian necessity, the ceaseless struggle for survival in which some Westerners would find the secret of human progress, is, to the philosophic Indian, Maya, illusion, the Ixion wheel to which we are bound, until right thinking and right living set us free.

To the Hindu, at any rate, it is not so much what we do that counts, as our attitude of mind in doing it. He does not, like the Buddhist, condemn war absolutely. Even the soldier has his *dharma*—a word somewhat inadequately translated by duty—to fulfil, and this not for his own sake, but because it is his allotted

But this spiritual unity of mankind must be of the spirit alone; violence, even the implied violence of the law, has no part in its foundation. No one is fit to be its pioneer who is not inspired by an unquestioning faith in the supremacy of love over hatred, and of reason over force. Great is the truth and it shall prevail.

About this spiritual revolution there is nothing of sentimentality or of emotionalism, in the bad sense. The most advanced or scientific thinker need have no qualms about accepting a programme that aims at bringing mankind, from a psychological standpoint, up to date. The restriction of love to frontiers is as much out of date as that of the universe to a few celestial spheres revolving at no great distance around the earth. The Behaviourist, who believes the whole of life to resolve itself into a mechanism of stimulus and response, should be the first to admit the desirability of getting mankind as a whole to respond adequately to immense complex of stimuli that is the result of mechanical civilization. The word "spirit" has perhaps unfortunate associations in some minds, but when we speak of a spiritual revolution, we are merely saying in other words,

"It is not so much what is done that counts, as the spirit in which it is done. Once let the spirit be right, and reason will have no difficulty in working out the details,"

which is after all less concise and eloquent than the simple sentence:

"When the spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth."

The true rationalist is he who wishes to see the affairs of mankind ordered on rational principles, but this will never be accomplished except by a change of spirit. There is not a thinking man in the world to-day who would defend the present state of affairs as being the best possible for mankind. Does anybody believe that it is right or reasonable that so large a proportion of human skill and energy should be specialized for purposes of destruction? that the flow of useful commodities should be restricted by a network of tariffs? that some nations should not have enough space to accommodate their growing populations, while others are keeping vast expanses of habitable land practically unpopulated? that

minorities in civilized states should be subjected to open and odious persecution? that while some nations are armed to the teeth, others, no less civilized, should be forcibly disarmed? Does any one, we repeat, doubt that these things, and a thousand others like them, are not only wrong, but to the last degree irrational? And yet, while every one admits them to be both, no one appears to have any means of righting or rationalizing them. And why—if it be not that the spirit is wrong?

The scientist may proclaim his independence of theology, but where the spirit is wrong, science cannot thrive. Such a spirit as that of Bolshevik Russia may cause a scientist to be persecuted and dismissed from his post, because he will not turn his lectures into vehicles of communist propaganda. The pious spirit of modern Tennessee makes the teaching of scientific doctrines a crime, punishable in the law courts, and the patriotic spirit of Chicago, or at least of its ex-Mayor, would not have tolerated unseasonable truth even where George Washington was concerned. A spiritual revolution is needed to make the world safe for science, and science safe for the world.

But the question will be asked, by what means is this spiritual revolution to be brought about, and by whom? The answer is simple, and if we again have recourse to the words of the greatest of all Revolutionists, it is because it is impossible to improve upon them:

“The Kingdom of God is within you.”

The spirit of mankind is nothing but the spirit of every one of us. A spiritual revolution must be individual before it can become world-wide. To reform the world, we shall begin best by reforming ourselves. There is no man or woman who, if fairly presented with the facts, is incapable of appreciating the mortal peril in which civilization stands to-day. If a ship were known to be in danger of sinking, not a man on board would hesitate to lend a hand at the pumps. It is only ignorance of the facts that prevents millions of thinking people to-day from breaking, like Bunyan's man in rags, into a lamentable cry of “What shall I do?”

There is something that every one of us can do. He can devote himself, with all his heart and mind and soul and strength, to cultivating the right spirit, a spirit inspired by love and guided

Juárez, Marshal, 326
 John, King of England, 272
 Johnson, Dr. Samuel, 274
 Jonah, 237
 Joshua, Hebrew leader, 179
 Josiah, King of Judah, 256
 Journalism, new school of, 293
 Judas Maccabees, 195
 Judith, 258
 Jugo-Slavia's rôle in future war, 373
 Junkers, the, 219

K

Kadesh, battle of, 177, 178
 Kant, Immanuel, 277
 Kenworthy, Commander, 343
 Khafre, Pharaoh, effigies of, 97
 King's "frith" or peace, 63
 Kipling, Rudyard, 200, 363, 404
 Kleist, dramatist, 223
 Kolin, battle of, 223
 Kshatriya caste in India, 244

L

Labour, division of, 176
 Laconia, Sparta, 215
 Lagash, Sumerian city, 103
 Lao Tse, founder of Taoism, 243
 Latin language, disuse of, 278
 Laws, first code of, 177
 Layamon, 272
 League of Nations, 357 *et seq.*, 370, 397, 405
 League of Sovereigns, the, 234
 Lee, General Robert E., 337
 Leibnitz, 397
 Leipzig, battle of, 235
 Lenin, Nikolai, 367, 380
 Leo, Pope, 262
 Leonidas, King of Sparta, 117
 Liao Yang, battle of, 313
 Liberal idealism, breakdown of, in 19th century, 290
 Liberty, idealizing of, 283
 Liège, assault on, 327
 Life, loss of, in war, 170 *et seq.*; philosophy of, 21
 Ligay, battle of, 229
 Lissa, naval battle of, 362
 Little Entente's rôle in possible future war, 373
 Llandaff Castle, The, 341
 London air raids, 342
 Long-bow, English, 301
 Louis XIV, of France, 48, 191, 273, 303

Love, analysis of, 27-29; evils of perverted forms of, 70; fostering of imagination, 25; perspectives of, 17
 Lowell, James Russell, 207
 Loyola, Ignatius, 221
 Ludendorff, General, 221, 327, 350
 Luther, Martin, 55, 269
 Lysander, Spartan general, 221

M

Macaulay, Thomas B., 402
 MacDougall, Dr., 72
 Machiavelli, 190, 263, 271
 Machine age, dawn of, 9
 Machine guns, 310
 Macleod, Fiona, 38
 Magazine rifles, 310
 Magdalenian culture, the, 36
 Magic, primitive man's devotion to, 239
 Magyar absorbed by Roumania, 153
 Maiden Castle, Dorset, 132
 Maine, blowing up of, 293
 Malplaquet, battle of, 232
 Man, a group-making animal, 36; a political animal, 39; in the Stone Age, 34-36; not fitted by nature for combative rôle, 32; primitive, development of pugnacity, 33 *et seq.*; specialized, 193 *et seq.*; the imaging animal, 25; wolfishness of, 194
 Manœuvres, military, 309 *et seq.*
 Man's command over matter, 10-13; world of imagination, 238
 Maoris, war customs of, 91
 Marengo, battle of, 226
 Marius, Gaius, 188
 Marlborough, Duke of, 137, 213, 232, 303
 Marne, battle of, 326
 Marston Moor, battle of, 303
 Marx, Karl, 367, 380, 404
 Masséna, Marshal, 203
 Mass-suggestion, powers of, 73
 Mazzini, Giuseppe, 219, 286
 Mechanical progress in war, 300 *et seq.*
 Memphis, Egypt, 92
 Mennonites, 270
 Mercer, Dr., 94, 95, 179
 Mercenary armies, 177
 Merrimac, The, 303
 Mesopotamia, primitive warfare in, 100 *et seq.*
 Messenia, 215
 Messiah, the, of the Hebrews, 65, 69
 Metaurus, battle of, 303

Middle Age lack of refinement, 263
 Middle Ages, development of sectional patriotism in, 271 *et seq.*; low ebb of Church and State, 268 *et seq.*
 Midianites, the, 254
 Militarism a blight, 212; Fascist, 365-367
 Military ceremonial routine, usefulness gone, 217; discipline, stunts the mind, 212; geniuses, 232, 233; manœuvres, 309 *et seq.*; psychology of, 205; Sadism, 200 *et seq.*; science of the future, 386 *et seq.*; tactics of Hannibal, 220; types, 218 *et seq.*
 Minié-ball invented, 305
 Mollwitz, battle of, 304
 Moltke, Count Helmuth, 123, 322
 Money, a synonym for "sinews of war," 135
 Mongols, the, 375
Monitor, The, 308
 Monro, Sir Charles, 5
 Montfort, Robert de, 45
 Montfort, Simon de, 272
 More, Sir Thomas, 276
 Morley, John, 219
 Morocco, blood feuds in, 62
 Moscow, Napoleon's defeat at, 230
 Moses, 254
 Mukden, battle of, 314
 Mumbo Jumbo 239
 Murat, Marshal, 304
 Murray, Prof. Gilbert, 66, 249
 Mussolini, Benito, 362, 363
 Mutiny, the Indian, 187

N

Napier, Sir Charles, 196
 Napier, Sir William, 305
 Napier, John, inventor of mobile fort, 133
 Napoleonic wars, 283; loss of life in, 170
 Naram Sin, 105
 Narcissist temperament, 27; defined, 201
 Naseby, battle of, 303
 Nation, the ideal magnitude of, 144
 National expansion, dangers accompanying, 146; morality of the 19th century, 285; problems of late 19th century, 297; religion of collective egotism, 355 *et seq.*; sentiment, force of, 227; tumors, 297
 Nationalism, early development of, 272 *et seq.*
 Naval warfare, changes in, 308 *et seq.*

Nicholas II, of Russia, 299
 Nicholson, Sir Arthur, 62
 Nietzsche, Frederick Wilhelm, 108, 288
 Nightingale, Florence, 306
 Nineveh, 110 *et seq.*
 Needle-gun, the Prussian, 306
 Nelson, Admiral Horatio, 226, 229, 304
New York Journal, 293
 Newton, Sir Isaac, 2, 3, 278
 Ney, Marshal, 228
 Nofret, Princess, picture statue of, 97
 Nordic peoples, individual fighters, 44; feuds among, 62
 Northcliffe, Lord, 336
 Norton's cylindro-conoidal bullet, 305

O

Omri, King of Israel, 255
 O'Trigger, Sir Lucius, 40
 Ouranos, 18

P

Palestine, crusading efforts, 158
 Palmerston, Lord, 285
 "Pan"-ism, 296
 Papacy, medieval story of, 263 *et seq.*
 Paris Peace Conference, 356
 Parma, Prince of, 233
 Passchendaele Ridge, 348
 Patriotism, developments and abuse of, 271 *et seq.*; fallacies of, 15
 Pausanias, King of Sparta, 117
 Pavia, plundering of, 203
 Peace, brought by the expansion of love; 68; Dante's glorification of, 266; projects for perpetual, 277
 Penn, William, 277
 Pepi, Pharaoh, 98
 Pepys, Samuel, 112
 Percussion gun supersedes flint lock, 231
 Pericles, 249, 252
 Persia, ancient, 117
 Personal combat, primitive, 41 *et seq.*
 Peru, ancient Inca Empire of, 148
 Peter the Great, 192
 Peter, Saint, 262
 Pharaohs, early wars of, 92 *et seq.*
 Philip the Fair, 266
 Philistia, 254
 Phœnicia, 254
 Pius II, 268
 Pizarro, 163
 Plantagenet, Henry, 264
 Platæa, massacre of, 203

Plaza Toro, Duke of, 206
 Plevena, battle of, 309
 Plutarch, 67
 Poe, Edgar Allan, 10
 Poincaré, M., 159
 Poison gas, use of, 342, 347
 Poison gases, of the future, 389
 Poland, partition of, 159, 284
 Polish problem, 297
 Pollock, Sir Frederick, 116
 Pompey, the Great, 225
 Pope, Alexander, 173
 Post-war disillusionment, 358 *et seq.*
 Power, beneficent use of, 300
 Predestination, doctrine of, 6
 Priests, cruelty of, 195
Prince Friedrich von Homburg, 124
 Propaganda during World War, 335
 Property, accumulation of developed war, 127
 Property destruction by war, 161 *et seq.*
 Prussia, 109; and Germany, 122 *et seq.*; domination of, 288; military rise and fall, 119 *et seq.*
 Prussia's seizure of Silesia, 150
 Psycho-analysis, 6
 Psychology, Behaviourist, 293
 Psychology, practical, new art evolved, 292
 Pugnacity, development of in primitive man, 33 *et seq.*

Q

Quakers, 270

R

Rahotep, picture statue of, 97
 Rameses II, Pharaoh, 178, 215
 Rameses III, Pharaoh, 179
 Ramilles, battle of, 224, 303
 Reformation, the, 268
 Relativity vs. Evolution, 3
 Religion, elevating influence of, 236 *et seq.*
 Renaissance, the, 276
 Repressions and fixations, 27
 Revolutions of 1848, 287
 Rhine, castles on, 133
 Richard I, King of England, 272
 Richelieu, Cardinal, 47, 270
 Rifle, advent of, 231; the magazine invented, 310; Minie invented, 306
 Robespierre, Augustin, 233
 Robot control of airships, 387
 Rocroi, battle of, 137, 303

Roman ceremony of the triumph, 200
 Roman civilization, cause of death of, 163
 Roman Empire, adopts Christianity, 261; expansion and downfall, 153 *et seq.*
 Roman Praetorian guards, 187
 Roman Republic, downfall and cause, 153
 Roman types of soldiers, 219
 Romans, the, personal combats of, 44
 Rome, blood feuds in, 67; professional soldiers of, 188
 Rome's struggle with Carthage, 150-152
 Rossbach, battle of, 224, 303
 Rousseau, Jean Jacques, 31
 Royal Society, the, of England, 273
 Ruhr Basin, 159
 Rumania absorbs Magyars, 159
 Rumania's rôle in a future war, 378
 Russell, Bertrand, 68
 Russia, 119, 139, 140; formulates the Holy Alliance, 283; pre-war conditions, 320; rôle in a future war, 379; war horrors in, 294
 Russian Bolshevism, 360, 367 *et seq.*
 Russo-Japanese War, 313

S

Sacred Band of the Thebans, 17
 Sadism, 201
 Sadowa, battle of, 362
 Saint Francis, 267
 St. Paul, 264
 St. Peter, 262 *et seq.*
 St. Pierre, Abbé, 277
 St. Thomas Aquinas, 264
 St. Thomas of Canterbury, 264
 Salamis, naval battle of, 117
 Salvation Army, 211
 Sargon of Akkad, 105
 Sarrail, General, 327
 Saxe, Marshal, 233
 Scharnhorst, 123, 289
 Science endows man with powers of self-destruction, 377, 378
 Scientific advancement of 17th century, 277
 Scipio Africanus, 187, 221
 Scott, Sir Percy, 341
 Scotland, clan loyalty in, 63; early patriotism in, 272
 Scotland's union with England, 150
 Scutage, or shield-money, 136
 Secret societies, 70

Sedan battle of, 224, 306
 Sennacherib, 111, 256
 Serbian pre-war situation, 319
 Sevastopol, siege of, 223
 Seven Years' War, loss of life in, 170
 Sexual passion and war, 204
 Shakespeare, William, 64, 234
Shannon, The, 308
 Shaw, Bernard, 170
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 57, 145, 279
 Shepherd Kings of Egypt, 99
 Sheridan, Gen. Philip, 200
 Shield-money, or scutage, 136
 Shrewsbury, Lord, 51
 Siege trains, 133
 Sitting Bull, 89
 Sixth Dynasty of Egypt, 98
 Size, not a measure of efficiency, 142
et seq.
 Skelton, John, 272
 Smith-Dorrien, General Sir Horace, 327
 Social problems, fallacies of, 141
 Social unity, bonds of, 60
 Society of Friends, 270
 Society of Jesus, 211
 Sociology, advent of, 141
 Socrates, 118, 166, 183
 Soldier, definition of, 196 *et seq.*;
 obedience and intelligence necessary,
 209; professional training of, 198;
 types of, 218 *et seq.*
 Soldierly instincts of animals, 87
 Soldiers, ancient Sumerian, 102; pro-
 fessional, 177 *et seq.*
 Soldiers' love of his calling, 186; hatred
 of innovations, 223
 Solomon, King of Israel, 180
 Soubise, General, 225
 Soult, Marshal, 337
 South African War, 294; tactics in, 313
 Space-time curvature, theory of, 18
 Spain, duelling in, 46
 Spanish-American War, 293
 Sparta, 109, 115 *et seq.*; mercenary
 armies of, 184; military training, 198
 Spears, General, 337
 Specialists, military, 177 *et seq.*
 Spengler, Herr, 6, 395
 Spirit, the, importance of its rôle, 12-14
 Spiritual re-awakening, effect of, 407
et seq.
 Spiritual revolution only salvation of
 civilization, 409
 State administered justice supplants
 private vengeance, 66
 State-craft de-spiritualized, 268
 Stein, Heinrich F. K., 123
 Steinmetz, von, General, 307
 Stone Age man, 34-36
 Strangers, instinctive prejudice against,
 74 *et seq.*
 Strife, primitive causes of, 40; gen-
 erated by fictions, 79
 Submarines, advent of, 341
 Sully, Duc de, 277
 Sully's international union project, 277
 Sumner and Keller, 14
 Sumerians, the, 101
 Sun, the Master, 181, 182, 189
 Survival of the fittest, theory of, 108
 Swaraj, Hindu self-government, 245
 Swedes, 124
 Swedish expansion under Gustavus
 Adolphus, 158
 Swift, Dean, 30
 Swiss professional soldiers, 191
 Sword, the cult of, 130; symbolic value
 of, 129
 Syracuse, capture of, 152
 Syria, 254

T

Talbot, Lord, 301
 Tank, war, ancient predecessor, 134,
 302; in the World War, 348
 Tannenberg, battle of, 224
 Taoism, 243
 Tarentum, 152
 Tennyson, Lord Alfred, 108
 Termites, military life of, 174
 Territory, struggle of nations for, 141
et seq.
 Teutonic civilization, welding of, 119
 Teutonic peoples, duelling customs, 45
 Thackeray, William M., 219
 Theodosius, Emperor, 262
 Thermopylae, 115, 117
 Third Dynasty of Egypt, 94
 Thirty Year's War, 122, 169, 270, 276, 303
 Thornton, Abraham, 47
 Thothmes III, Pharaoh, of Egypt, 107,
 178, 206, 215
 Thucydides, 249, 250
 Tigris-Euphrates Basin, early wars
 in, 101-105, 110
 Tolstoy, Count Leo, 219, 345
 Tools, effects of Man's taking to use of,
 174 *et seq.*
 Towton, battle of, 303
 Traders, primitive, 194
 Trafalgar, battle of, 224
 Tragedies, historic, 167
 Transport, animal, for war purposes, 131
 Trasimene, battle of, 303

Treaty of Versailles, 378
 Treitschke, Heinrich, 123
 Trevelyan, Prof., 219
 Trial by combat or judicial duel, 45
 et seq.
 Troy, the siege of, 83
 Turenne, Marshal, 233
 Types of soldiers, 218 *et seq.*

U

Ulm, battle of, 224
 Umma, Sumerian city, 103
 Union of nations, Sully's project, 277
 United States enters World War, 350
 Universal spiritual union, 407 *et seq.*
 Universal suffrage, advent of, 285
 Universe, the, atomic theory, 18-22
 Ur, excavations at, 101

V

Valens, Flavius, 222
 Vengeance, blood feuds of primitive peoples, 61 *et seq.*
 Verdun, battles at, 334
 Vikings, personal combats of, 45
 Vinci, Leonardo da, 19
 Vishnuvites, the, 244
 Voltaire, 233, 277, 397

W

Wagner, Richard, 76
 Wallace, William, 272
 Walled cities, early, 132
 Wallenstein, Bohemian general, 191
 Wansdyke, England, 132
 War, a custom, 90; among primitive peoples, 89 *et seq.*; among West African tribes, 89; ancient Assyrian, 113 *et seq.*; application of science to, 300; Buddhist attitude concerning, 246 *et seq.*; business motives, 83; capitalization of, 136 *et seq.*; civilizations' great enemy, 237; Clausewitz theory of, 289; costs of, 128 *et seq.*; destroyer of "civilizations," 163 *et seq.*; first historical campaign, 92; followed the development of property 127; forecast of a future World War, 378 *et seq.*; future destructive agents, 387; horrors of a possible future, 390; influences against, 235 *et seq.*; in primitive Mesopotamia, 100 *et seq.*; its attendant curses, 171; mechanical progress in, 300 *et seq.*; of the future, three-dimensional, 385 *et seq.*; organized, genesis of, 91; guilt literature on, 317; ruthlessness of, 200 *et seq.*; violence never stinted, 276
 Warfare of the future, 385 *et seq.*

Wars, Indian, analysis of, 88; that exterminated the conquered, 375
 Warship rams discarded, 308
 Washington, George, 272
 Waterloo, battle of, 229, 304
 Watts, Isaac, 240
 Weapons, development of, 128 *et seq.*; improvement of, 307 *et seq.*; of primitive man, 35; the bow discovered, 36
 Wellington, Duke of, 49, 136, 203, 229, 233, 304, 305
 Wells, H. G., 336, 342
 West African tribal war, 89
 Westermarck, Dr., 60
 White ants, military activities of, 174
 Wilde, Oscar, 60
 Wilhelm, Professor, 241
 William II, German Kaiser, 321 *et seq.*
 Wilson, Woodrow, 356 *et seq.*
 Wolseley, Lord, 230, 307
 Wooden warships become obsolete, 303
 Woolley, C. Leonard, 101, 104
 Wordsworth, William, 73
 World War, apportionment of blame, 321; Austria collapses, 352; barren of literary inspiration, 345; Bulgarian collapse, 352; campaigns of 1916, 334 *et seq.*; causes leading to, 318 *et seq.*; chivalry impossible, 337; dearth of war poems, 346; decided by exhaustion, 333; disillusionment comes, 344; disintegration of German Army, 352; entry of the United States, 350; French tactics, 324 *et seq.*; German tactics, 322 *et seq.*; of the possible future, 381 *et seq.*; Palestine campaign, 329; Russian army in, 328; ruthlessness of tactics, 338; submarines in, 341; Turkish army collapses, 352; use of air-craft, 342 *et seq.*; use of poison gas, 342, 347; use of tanks, 348
 Wu, Chinese General, 181, 182, 189
 Wu, Chinese, King, 241, 242

X

Xenophon, 183, 224

Y

Yahweh, or Jehovah, 254
 Youth, natural combativeness of, 359

Z

Zama, battle of, 221, 229, 303
 Ziska, John, 231, 302
 Zola, Emile, 219